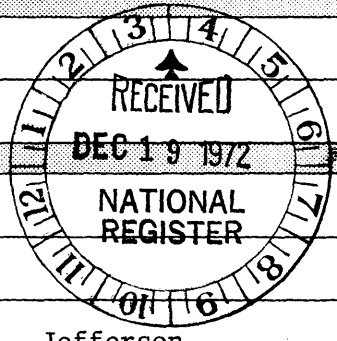


PH0020010

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Alabama	
COUNTY: Jefferson	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	FEB 28 1973



**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Southern Railway Terminal Station

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Southern Railway Terminal Station

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1905 Alabama Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:  
Bessemer

STATE: Alabama      CODE: 01      COUNTY: Jefferson      CODE: 073

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Southern Railway System

STREET AND NUMBER:  
2201 1st Avenue North

CITY OR TOWN: Birmingham      STATE: Alabama      CODE: 01

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
City Block #202 Sec. 10, T 19 R4 West, Bessemer City

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1905 Alabama Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Bessemer      STATE: Alabama      CODE: 01

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:       Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:      STATE:      CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER: FEB 28 1973

DATE:

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The railroad terminal building has changed little since it was completed March 1, 1916. The structure, which measures 170 feet in length and 50 feet in width, has exterior walls of pressed, brown brick with metal trimming of rolled copper.

The roof plan is irregular, having two levels of hipped roof and a center section which is gabled. Heavy tile was used to cover all sections of the roof. The upper level of the hipped roof is raised above the primary level to allow the ceilings of the waiting room to rise to a height of 22 feet. Windows line the small portion of wall between the two sections of roof, and give light to the waiting rooms. These sections of the roof have wide overhangs supported by brackets.

The interior design of the building includes two waiting rooms of equal size measuring 25 x 36 feet each. A smaller waiting room and toilet room are located on the north end of the building. This smaller waiting room was furnished with rocking chairs and other pleasant furnishings for the ladies. A separate room on the south end of the building was used for the baggage room department.

The woodwork and trim throughout the building is of hand-finished Circassian walnut. Wainscotting is used to the height of four feet on the walls of the waiting rooms. The material used was pressed stone on concrete, highly polished. The floor is poured concrete laid off in squares.

The building is lighted during the day by large glass windows. Originally, it was lighted at night by indirect lighting fixtures.

This building contained one of the earlier vapor heating systems to be installed in the South. This system was a combination of hot water and steam heating systems. Its principal virtue lies in the economy of operation, a pound of steam being sufficient to heat the building.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

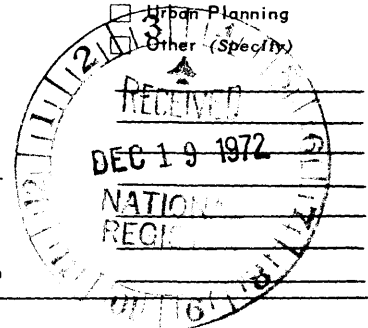
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |                                       |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |  |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |                                       |  |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal             | <input type="checkbox"/> Education    | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric            | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering  | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic               | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry     | <input type="checkbox"/> losophy                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention    | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture           | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape    | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce               | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature   | <input type="checkbox"/> itarian                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications         | <input type="checkbox"/> Military     | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation           | <input type="checkbox"/> Music        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bessemer Southern Railway Terminal is an excellent example of a small town railroad terminal constructed in the early 1900's. Built by the Alabama Great Southern Railroad as the result of a direct order by the Railroad Commissioner, the building stands as a monument to the importance of Bessemer, one of the early industrial towns of Alabama.

Bessemer was founded in 1887 as a result of the iron and steel making boom in Jefferson County. The town founder, Henry Debardeleben, noted that the coal and iron beds which lay in close proximity to the town "were intended by nature to feed some great creature." He was correct and the town prospered. Around the turn of the century, Bessemer, which had a population of 6,358, was served by five railroads none of which offered more than a one-room shack for passengers.

In February of 1906, a group of citizens who called themselves the Bessemer Board of Trade invited the Railroad Commissioner to inspect the terminal buildings. He found them "unfit to keep cattle in."

As a result the lines which served Bessemer were ordered jointly to build a Union Station. No agreement was reached by the lines and consequently the town continued to use the five wooden shacks.

In 1915 the Railroad Commission was called in again and proposals were heard. The Railroad Commissioner, Charles Henderson, who was running for governor, decreed that the Union Station was not necessary as long as each line built its own terminal. After the election of Henderson the new Railroad Commissioner, B. H. Cooper, visited the town and ordered both the L & N and Alabama Great Southern systems to erect a new station within 60 days. It was specified that AGS would spend \$30,000.

This railway system decided to employ its own building and mechanical forces in the construction of the terminal, rather than let a contract. H. F. Latimer, Division Passenger Agent for the railroad, was instructed to make a trip through the west to make a careful inspection of the most up-to-date stations and to employ their best features in the plans of Bessemer Station.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Bessemer Weekly Newspaper - January 9, 1915, March 13, 1915, March 27, 1915, May 1, 1915, February 26, 1915, July 24, 1915 March 4, 1915 - on file in Bessemer Hall of History Museum, Bessemer, Alabama

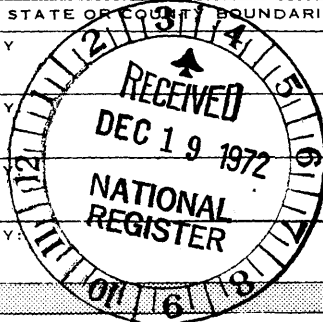
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		33° 24' 04"	86° 57' 01"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than 1

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: W. Warner Floyd, Executive Director

ORGANIZATION: Alabama Historical Commission DATE: 11-22-72

STREET AND NUMBER: 305 South Lawrence

CITY OR TOWN: Montgomery STATE: Alabama CODE: 01

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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 National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name Milo B Howard, Jr.

Title SLC

Date December 11, 1972

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert K. Utley  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 2/28/73

ATTEST:

[Signature]  
Keeper of The National Register

Date 2-27-73

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Alabama	
COUNTY	
Jefferson	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	FEB 28 1973

(Number all entries)

8. Significance (Continued)

The depot was completed in 1916 at the specified cost of \$30,000 and the town's most prominent citizens acted as a reception committee at the opening on March 2, 1916. At present the Bessemer Hall of History is attempting to acquire the terminal for use as its museum.

