

PH0001015

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: ALABAMA	
COUNTY: MADISON	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 719.01.0015	DATE 9/10/71

1. NAME

COMMON:
Southern Railway System Depot

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Memphis and Charleston Railroad Company Passenger Depot

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
330 Church Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Huntsville

STATE Alabama	CODE 01	COUNTY: Madison	CODE 089
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	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 type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	freight office
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		only; passen-
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		ger service
				discontinued

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Southern Railway System

STREET AND NUMBER:
920 15th Street, N. W.

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE: D. C.	CODE 08
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Madison County Courthouse, Room 300, Deed book AA, pages 437-8

STREET AND NUMBER:
The Square

CITY OR TOWN:
Huntsville

STATE: Alabama	CODE 01
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6. REPRESENTATION ON EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

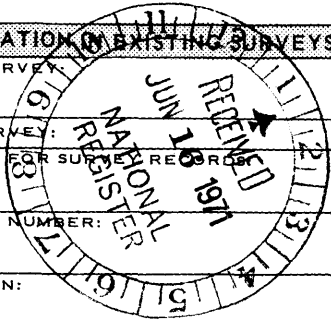
DATE OF SURVEY:

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:	CODE:
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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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 Huntsville Depot is a two-story building with a large attic which served as a third floor. Built of red brick, the building has a stone foundation and four end-interior chimneys. The projecting eaves of the gabled roof are supported by brackets. A line of decorative brick work lies under these eaves. At the third story level at each end are three arched windows with arched wooden architraves, and a round light at the top of the gables. At either end of the row of windows is a quarter circle window, which was used for ventilation. All of these windows and lights have been boarded with plywood. There is some evidence that shutters were once on all the windows.

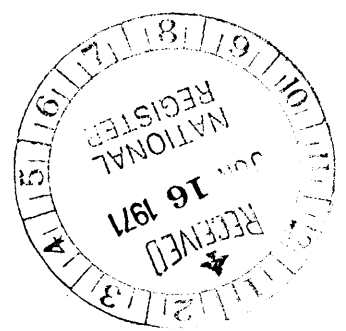
There are pilasters at each of the four corners. The north and south sides have five windows at the second floor level. Each of these windows is arched and is decorated with an arched architrave. The sills are of wood. The first floor is the same except on the north side which has a central double door with five panes in the arched transoms. The north and east sides also have a canopy at the first floor level supported by a large triangular brackets at regular intervals. This canopy was an 1913 improvement of an existing one. There is no record of the appearance of the original canopy.

A report to the President described the original physical appearance as being 70 x 58 feet, and having on the first floor, large waiting rooms for ladies and gentlemen, Engineer's and Conductor's rooms, a ticket office and baggage rooms. The second floor housed the offices of the Superintendent, the Secretary, the Treasurer and the other officers of the road. These offices were provided with fireproof vaults. The upper floor was finished with sleeping rooms for the officers and operatives of the road.

The depot remained unchanged until the Southern Railway System remodeled the interior of the first floor in 1912 and made the additions to the canopy. Most of the interior features were removed. Partitions were replaced and electric lights were added. Since 1912 there have been no major construction changes, and except for the boarding up of windows, the second and third floors remain almost as constructed in 1860.

The depot is in excellent structural condition.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) built 1860; interior remodeled 1912

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	<u>prison</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	<u>hospital</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Memphis and Charleston Railroad Depot built in 1860 is the oldest railway terminal standing in Alabama and one of the last surviving physical evidences of the South's most significant antebellum rail systems. During the Civil War the Depot was used as a temporary Federal prison.

The Memphis and Charleston Railroad was the most important transportation line in the South, in addition to being the most potent factor in the commercial development of Northern Alabama. Originally incorporated under the laws of Tennessee on February 2, 1846, the railway embodied one of the early dreams of the south--to connect the Mississippi River at Memphis with the Atlantic Ocean at Charleston. The merchants and farmers of North Alabama had long suffered from the loss of their cargo in the treacherous Muscle Shoals of the Tennessee River. Thus when a railroad was planned, the citizens of Huntsville were determined to have the line go through their city. By 1849 the citizens had voted \$50,000 toward the proposed railroad, and by 1850 it had been decided that the route would definitely go through Huntsville, which would also be the headquarters for the Eastern Division. On January 7, 1850, the company was chartered by the legislature of Alabama as the Memphis and Charleston Railroad Company.

Work on the railroad was begun in Madison County May 21, 1852, and by October 13, 1855 the first train rolled into the temporary Huntsville depot. Between the years 1856 and 1859, a freight depot, an engine house, a machine shop, and two car shops were constructed on the Huntsville yard. In December, 1860, the present passenger depot was completed with all the latest conveniences.

On April 11, 1862, Federal troops under General O. M. Mitchell captured the city of Huntsville. The express purpose of this raid was the capture of the eastern headquarters of the M & C railroad, thus breaking the vital east-west artery of the Confederacy. On that date, Mitchell in a wire to Captain J. B. Fry reported: "We have at length succeeded in cutting the great artery of railway inter-communications between the Southern States." In addition to capturing 15 locomotives and a large number of passenger and platform cars, they also captured about 200 Confederate soldiers who were returning by rail to their units. The prisoners were confined within the depot until two made their escape. The remainder of the prisoners were then shipped to Ohio.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Material on file, Alabama Historical Commission, 305 South Lawrence Street, Montgomery, Alabama.
 Moore, A. B. History of Alabama, Alabama Bookstore Press: Tuscaloosa, 1951.
 Owen, Thomas, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, Vol. II, Chicago: S. J. Clark Publishing Company, 1921.
 Summersell, C. G., Alabama: History for Schools, Colonial Press: Birmingham, 1957.

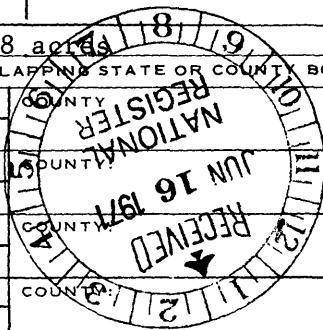
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	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	° ' "	° ' "		34° 44' 03"	86° 35' 26"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2.8 acres

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: June 1, 1971

STREET AND NUMBER:
 305 South Lawrence Street

CITY OR TOWN: Montgomery

STATE: Alabama

CODE: 01

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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: Wils B. Howard, Jr.

Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: June 4, 1971

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

Ernest A. Connolly
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

SEP 10 1971

Date: _____

ATTEST:

William M. Mudgett
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: AUG 6 1971

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
ALABAMA	
COUNTY	
MADISON	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
71.9.01.0015	9/10/91

(Number all entries)

3. Significance - Memphis and Charleston Railroad Company Passenger Depot

As Mrs. William Chadwick reported in her diary, "The M & C did not cease to be operated, it simply changed hands. The workmen employed by the Confederate government either returned in the morning to work for Uncle Sam or were replaced by Yankee mechanics." During the war the M & C served as a base for gathering supplies for Union forces operating in the western theater.

After the war the line was returned to the Memphis and Charleston Co. in deteriorated condition. Of the 155 miles of track within the state in 1861, 140 miles were torn up. The railroad was rebuilt by the owners but never recovered financially, and finally was sold February 26, 1898, to the Southern Railway System, its present owners.

In 1912 the depot was remodeled, but only the interior was changed.

In 1950, Dr. Werner Von Braun and his team of German rocket scientists arrived in Huntsville at this depot and went on to build the nation's space program.

Passenger service was discontinued in 1967 and the depot has since been used as a freight station. The city of Huntsville plans to buy the depot and restore it as a museum.

