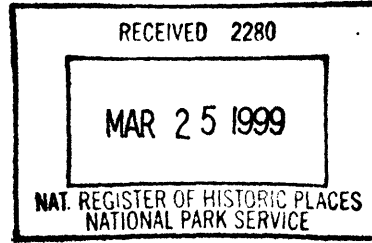


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

Ala. Historical Commission

1. Name of Property

historic name Birmingham-Southern College
other names/site number Old Campus

2. Location

street & number Arkadelphia Road between 8th Avenue West and I-20/59
Not for publication N/A
city or town Birmingham Vicinity: N/A
state Alabama code AL county Jefferson code 001
zip code 35208

073

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 3/12/99
Signature of certifying official Date

Alabama Historical Commission (State Historic Preservation Office)

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain):

Edson H. Beall

4/22/99

Beall

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>		sites
<u>2</u>		structures
		objects
<u>8</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

=====

6. Function or Use

=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>EDUCATION</u>	Sub: <u>College:</u>
_____	<u>Administration Building</u>
_____	<u>Library</u>
_____	<u>Training School Building</u>
_____	<u>Woman's Building</u>
_____	<u>President's House</u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>EDUCATION</u>	Sub: <u>College:</u>
_____	<u>Administration building(s)</u>
_____	<u>President's House</u>
_____	<u>Maintenance Building</u>
_____	<u>Classrooms/laboratories</u>
_____	<u>Alumnae Building</u>

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>LATE 19TH AND 20TH</u>	Sub: <u>Neoclassical Revival</u>
<u>CENTURY REVIVALS</u>	<u>Mediterranean Revival</u>
_____	<u>Colonial Revival: Georgian</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

roof ASPHALT

walls BRICK

STUCCO

other STONE: Limestone

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See attached Continuation Sheets.

=====
8. Statement of Significance
=====

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.) N/A

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1921-1931

Significant Dates:

- 1921
- 1923
- 1929
- 1931

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder: Miller & Martin, Architects
Whitlin, D.O., Architect

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See attached Continuation Sheets.

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

=====

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

See attached Continuation Sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS) N/A

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency: Alabama State Archives

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other:

Name of repository: Rush Learning Center, Birmingham-Southern College Archives

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 19 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	513750	3708070	3	16	514000	3707840	5	16	513470 3707965
2	16	513970	3708070	4	16	513470	3707880			

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Linda Nelson (with Michelle Crunk, B-SC Dept.of History) and
Trina Binkley, AHC reviewer

organization FuturePast date July 21, 1998

street & number 4700 Seventh Court South telephone (205) 592-6610

city or town Birmingham state AL zip code 35222

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Birmingham-Southern College
street & number P.O. Box 549002 telephone (205) 226-4625 (Pres.' office)
city or town Birmingham state Alabama zip code 35254

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Birmingham-Southern College
Jefferson County, Alabama

=====

Description of Physical Appearance:

The present district is not by any means the entirety of the present campus, which has grown mightily over the years and especially in the last decades under the direction of President Neal Berte. Nominated buildings are clustered generally on the old Hilltop, including those on the Owen Quadrangle, and the three buildings to the south of the quadrangle, namely Stockham Woman's building, the President's House, and the Simpson Building, the latter sitting somewhat west of the main campus facing on Eighth Avenue West. The map best showing the nominated campus at the time when it was all that was there is the Bethel Whitson 1927 map (see attachments), lacking only Stockham among the Contributing buildings and Phillips Science among the Non-contributing buildings.

The portion of the original Hilltop campus now being nominated is on the crest of Flint Ridge, which is a lower ridge running parallel to Red Mountain along Jones Valley to the west of Birmingham. The nominated portion is bounded on the east by the Arkadelphia Road, on the south by Eighth Avenue West, on the north by a line drawn across the quadrangle between Old Phillips and the Harbert Building, running between Phillips Science and the new Norton Student Center; then a diagonal line on the west to encompass Simpson and reconnect with Eighth Avenue. The campus is now landscaped with many shade trees and paved pathways-- not to mention the considerable accommodation for an increasing influx of student cars.

With two exceptions, all of the nominated buildings are of a stolid Neoclassical Revival style and were designed by Birmingham architects Miller & Martin, later Miller, Martin & Lewis. (The long association of Miller & Martin with College benefactor and trustee Robert S. Munger in his commercial developments may be the reason for that firm's strong presence at Birmingham-Southern.) The first excepted structure is the Simpson Building, which is a Mediterranean-influenced school in the then-standard U form with courtyard gymnasium, designed by architect D.O. Whildin. The other exception is the Georgian Revival President's House, also designed by Miller & Martin.

The College's long-time emphasis on a classical liberal arts curriculum is reflected in the classicism of the buildings and perhaps dictated its choice as a dominant style. The most closely associated four buildings, three on the quadrangle and Stockham Woman's Building off to one side, all are characterized by colossal porticoes with massive stone columns; the capitals were intended to be instructive devices in architecture and are representative of the orders: Phillips Administration has Corinthian, Stockham has Ionic, Phillips Science has Doric, and Munger has an elaborate Egypto-Corinthian meant, perhaps, to indicate its primacy in the hierarchy of structures. The old Ramsay (now replaced by Harbert) also had Ionic capitals; since demolition of the building in 1986 these have unfortunately been lost.

The historic and visual focal point of the district is Munger Memorial Hall (1928), sited at the crest of the Hilltop at the terminus of a straight drive up from Eighth Avenue West on its south side and supervising Owen Quadrangle and the academic campus on its north, a massive portico facing each direction. This site is so plainly the choice one that the original administration building, Rose Owen Hall of

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Section 7 Page 2

Birmingham-Southern College
Jefferson County, Alabama

=====

1897, was here as well; for a generation the only brick building on campus, this early structure was destroyed in order to make way for Munger. Flanking Munger along the sides of the quadrangle are, on the east, Phillips Library (now Phillips Administration or Old Phillips, 1923) and, on the west, Phillips Science (1951), the latter designated non-contributing in the district because of its late construction date and not because it fails to complement the style and atmosphere of the old campus.

To the south and slightly to the west of Munger on the site of former frame dormitories sits Stockham Woman's Building, a smaller but still imposing Classical focal point that also fronts in both directions with a colossal portico. Still farther to the west and close to Eighth Avenue, which it faces, is the Simpson Building, its Mediterranean-influenced styling and rangy profile making an interesting contrast with the staid classicism of the rest of the old campus and also relating more warmly with the Bush Hills neighborhood that lies along Southern's northern and western boundaries.

The 1925 President's House is sited below the brow of the hill on the lawn sloping down to the street between the Arkadelphia/Eighth Avenue corner and the old main driveway up to Munger. Its natural masking makes it almost invisible from the Hilltop and even from the street below, but it commands a sweep of lawn and trees worthy of an estate. Its red brick Georgian style complements the Classical campus but retains a gracious residential atmosphere and a sense of privacy.

Also included in the district are brick and stone-quoined gate posts flanking the old driveway entrance to the College from Eighth Avenue West; these were a gift of the Class of 1927 and were repeated somewhat to the west by another class gift in 1930. The lots bordering Eighth Avenue had been added to the campus in 1919, and the original road from the avenue connected with a sort of ring road that encircled the developed campus; the drive was extended all the way up to Munger only recently, in the early years of Neal Berte's presidency. The actual fencing of the campus was, unfortunately, made necessary because of insecurities resulting from violence in the neighborhood in the 1970s and '80s, some of it against the students. Now the only functioning entrance to the campus is through the new Bruno gates off Arkadelphia Road; although conditions are improved, still the older drives in from the south side are gated and not used.

Whereas the campus is more extensive than the present district, comprising now about 300 acres and being occupied by new academic, athletic and residential facilities, boundaries are drawn based on the heart of the old campus and the connected and related aspects of the structures from the decade of the 1920s. For further justification of this choice of period, see the Statement of Significance following.

Archeological Component:

Although there has not been a formal archeological survey of the Birmingham-Southern College campus, the potential for some subsurface remains may be good.

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Section 7 Page 3

Birmingham-Southern College
Jefferson County, Alabama

Inventory

1. M. Paul Phillips Library (now Administration), 1923 (C)

Neoclassical Revival, two storeys with basement and what appears to be attic storey; red brick with limestone decoration; hip roof of relatively higher pitch than the others (accommodating the skylight over the interior rotunda), making the building look almost Georgian. Nine bays on facade, central three under a shallow colossal portico with massive columns: actually projecting central pavilion, walled at sides with brick, with engaged square corner columns and two round ones *in antis*, all with Corinthian capitals.

Ground-floor windows 8-over-8 wood sash with round-head transoms, double row of headers for arches. Glass in these windows is purplish because of filming, but appears to be very old. Wood panels below window to the floor limestone course. Upper sash 6-over-6 with stone sills. Small lower cornice, vent panels above, then another small cornice.

Double entry in center flanked by 6-over-6 rectangular windows with plain entablatures above. Six-light transom and pedimented gable surmount doors. Spandrels between lower and upper windows contain stone panels with *bas* relief swags. Main gable has brick tympanum, unlike the other buildings which have stone tympana, and bullseye window with stone surround. General appearance is of Jeffersonian Classicism except for the elaborate capitals.

Interior has been partitioned for use of Administration offices but retains its central reception area under a rotunda and flat stained glass skylight, the rotunda supported by a circle of columns.

The library housed several collections donated to it prior to 1931, including the library of former College President and Methodist Bishop James H. McCoy and the rare book collection of Birmingham author James Saxon Childers. By 1934 the library was already inadequate to the books in it, and a rear addition was built, a 25 X 50 foot section of well matched red brick, designed with pilaster ribs for greater strength.

After completion of the Rush Learning Center in 1976, Old Phillips has been used as an administration and admissions building, and it also houses the College construction office on the ground floor.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 4

Birmingham-Southern College
Jefferson County, Alabama

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2. Munger Memorial Hall, 1928 (C)

Constructed 1927-28 by contractors J.F. Holley Construction Co. Three storeys with basement. Gift of Mrs. Robert S. Munger, who did not live to see it finished, as a memorial to her husband. Originally drawn with a crowning cupola, which was never built.

Neoclassical Revival, steel frame construction clad with red brick with Indiana limestone decoration; three storeys and basement with shallow projecting central bays on both front and rear; on quadrangle side with *piano nobile*; central colossal porticoes fronting central bays on foundation of coursed limestone ashlar; four massive limestone columns with Corinthian/Egyptian capitals, with reflecting rectilinear pilasters on face of building. Limestone also on facade under porticoes, quoins, entablatures and cornices. Terrace on quad facade with balustrade flanking the portico on both sides.

Windows are tripartite 8-over-8 sash with 1-over-1 sides; spandrels between rows are copper, now treated so as not to turn green. Little bracket tails in corners of upper sash, and a thickened middle rail, give the sash a deeper solidity and interest. Stone-capped brick parapet wall surmounts the cornice, pierced by open balustrade panels in line with the windows. Main-floor windows are distinguished by round-arched niches with console keystones under the porticoes and gabled pediments elsewhere. The main porch gables are faced in stone with simple discs inscribed in the tympanum.

The driveway facade of Munger contains three double entries with 6-light transoms off a ground-level basement terrace; balcony above with iron railings between the columns. A center panel on the second floor is occluded with stone, having no window at that level in the center bay.

Munger originally housed classrooms, administrative offices, and a 1200-seat auditorium, which was also used for chapel services. The second floor housed the President's office, offices of the dean, registrar, bursar and secretaries on one side, and alumni offices across the hall, with summer school and college news bureau offices, information office, and a telephone room with branch exchange. The third floor had classrooms, an art gallery and museum, and two other offices. Its present uses do not differ markedly from its historic ones, with the exception of the art gallery and museum, which now have a building of their own.

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Birmingham-Southern College
Jefferson County, Alabama

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3. M. Paul Phillips Science Building, 1951; laboratory addition 1989-90 (NC)

Science lab and classroom building with Neoclassical Revival stylistic elements that make it compatible with its forebears on the quadrangle: concrete frame construction clad in red brick with limestone courses, quoins, portico and base, and crowning cornice. Basically ell-shaped; basement and two storeys on quadrangle side with *piano nobile* main floor, deepening to three storeys as landscape falls off toward rear. Slightly projecting central bay with colossal portico in center of facade: Doric columns paired at sides, gable pediment with plain entablature and tympanum. Large square wood-frame hopper windows with center panel of horizontal muntins and side panels of smaller lights created by side vertical muntins. Double-door entry in basement (ground) level and on *piano nobile* first floor; this main entry is slightly recessed with a transom and limestone surround, dentil blocks and console brackets framing. The basement entry is flanked by round-arched windows, the only ones in the building.

The 1966 two-storey brick annex is detached from the original building and has access to it by an elevated walkway over the sidewalk; it is therefore out of the district.

In 1990 a glass and brick laboratory addition was built connecting directly on the south with the old building, angled back somewhat and not readily visible from the quadrangle. The roofline is somewhat lower than the original, and the entire front corner is a glass-paneled atrium with stair, adding to its unobtrusiveness as an addition but making its modernism unmistakable. Interestingly, however, it is more attuned stylistically to the original structure than the earlier and detached annex.

This 1951 building was made possible by M. Paul Phillips, benefactor of the 1923 Library, through a gift left to the College in his will.

4. Stockham Woman's Building, 1931 (C)

Gift of Mrs. William Herbert Stockham. Two storeys and ground-level basement; Neoclassical Revival, varitone red brick with limestone trim, the brick laid in staggered columns of stretchers and headers to create a pattern. *Piano nobile* basement foundation of coursed limestone ashlar. Colossal gabled portico on south facade, supported by four Ionic limestone columns; on north facade the gabled central bay is defined by projecting sides of brick as in the Phillips Library, with a central entry *loggia* and two massive limestone Ionic columns *in antis*. The main building entry is on this side, with double doors, flanking limestone pilasters and entablature above and a fanlight in the transom panel, a small iron rail above, and a large pendant lantern hanging from the ceiling.

Primary windows are 9-over-9 wood sash in the basement level, likewise on the main level with the exception of the French doors with transoms in place of windows under the south portico; on the second level they are primarily 4-over-4 sash, and on the ends they are 6-over-6 sash. End gable walls are decorated with blind limestone cartouches, and there are secondary entrances at the main level.

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Birmingham-Southern College
Jefferson County, Alabama

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Stockham Woman's Building, continued:

The Woman's Building was conceived as a venue for co-eds' activities and programs, and when opened it housed the women's physical education department in the ground level basement, and reception rooms and offices for the YWCA and other women's organizations on the main floor. The upper floor contained suites for sororities, predating the individual houses. The building is now primarily an alumni office, although the main reception room, Stockham Parlor, is still used for campus events and gatherings.

5. President's House, 1925 (C)

Funded by William Herbert Stockham family on site of a frame classroom building on the front slope of the hill facing Eighth Avenue West. Side-gabled Georgian residence; two-and-a-half storeys, red varitone brick, five-bay main block with drop-roof side extension on both sides; slightly recessed central entry with one-storey porch stoop with balustraded roof supported by four Tuscan columns, paired to either side, with a flat cornice and dentil molding. Above the entry on the second storey is a tripartite casement window. Three gabled dormers across front roof with round-head 6-over-6 sash windows and framing pilasters; small shed dormer on rear roof. Windows are 6-over-6 wood sash with shutters; east extension contains a picture window on front; skylight in west main roof. Two chimneys, one at the east end of the main block and a taller one at the rear of the west extension. There is also a one-storey extension or addition at the west rear, with its gabled roof running parallel to the main roof. P. G. Williams, contractor.

6. Simpson Preparatory School (now Simpson Operations Building), 1923 (C)

A two-storey school building (actually one storey with a basement that is ground-level in front), in form typical of schools of the period, a U-shape with gymnasium facility built into the courtyard; in style a restrained Mediterranean design, stucco over brick with a concrete tile roof. Its primary facade runs along Eighth Avenue, side-gabled with a slightly projecting gabled central entry bay. It is defined largely by its generous windows: on the first level they are metal casement, on the second floor they are wood casement, with deep multipane transoms above them. The gabled end bays have attic vents in the form of cartouches in limestone, and the main portals are surrounded by a coursed limestone facing with a somewhat Egyptian entablature and surmounting Palladian window.

Simpson was built as a preparatory school teaching facility for teachers in training at the College; it also alleviated a crowded classroom situation in the old Rose Owen Hall. It became the home of the Birmingham Conservatory of Music in 1940, which leased it from the College. In 1953 the Conservatory became part of the College. D.O. Whildin, architect; Earl Cline, contractor.

The building is now used as the maintenance headquarters and appears to be in poor condition, at least superficially.

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Birmingham-Southern College
Jefferson County, Alabama

7. Campus Gateposts, Classes of 1927 and 1930 (C)

The Class of 1927 gave the College brick and stone-quoined gatepost pillars flanking the drive up from Eighth Avenue West. They are square with simple stone cornices and stone vase finials sitting on top. The sidewalks to either side were likewise flanked by smaller pillars, also square but unquoined and without finials.

The Class of 1930 made an identical gift to the College for the drive entering the campus from Eighth Avenue somewhat further to the west, nearer the Simpson Building. Presently there are wrought iron gates and fencing, and the gates are almost always locked now.

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Birmingham-Southern College
Jefferson County, Alabama

=====

Statement of Significance

The old campus of Birmingham-Southern College is being nominated to the National Register under Criterion A, based on its association with the development of post-secondary education in Alabama, its historic maintenance of a high standard of liberal arts education, and its primary relationship to Methodist institutions in Alabama and the South.

It is also being nominated under Criterion C, based on its intact collection of 1920s-era Revivalist buildings, primarily Neoclassical Revival but also Mediterranean and Colonial Revival styles, occupying a discrete and historic site on the campus.

Justification of the Period of Significance:

Criterion A. The major period of growth, construction, and establishment of education policy and style was in the decade of the 1920s under the presidency of Dr. Guy Everett Snavelly. His administration opened the mission of the College beyond the classical and ministerial studies of the College's origins in Greensboro and Birmingham, simultaneously expanding its support from church sources only to community and corporate commitments. Expanded curriculum, maintenance of academic standards, and construction of the historic campus all occurred or began as policy in these ten years (1921-1931).

Criterion C. The old campus as nominated was all built under the administration of Dr. Snavelly, president of the College from 1921-1938. The latest of the Contributing buildings was finished and dedicated in 1931. After that date nothing was built on the nominated portion of the campus until 1951, although funds for Phillips Science had been reserved for the College under Dr. Snavelly's administration.

Significant dates noted on the form are 1921, the advent to Birmingham-Southern College of Dr. Snavelly; 1923, the year of construction of Phillips Library and the beginning of the construction of the old campus; 1929, because the onset of the Depression had significant negative effect on campus development; and 1931, the date of the completion of Stockham Woman's Building, after which no other building was done until the 1940s on a portion of the campus not included in the present District.

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Birmingham-Southern College
Jefferson County, Alabama

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History of the College:

Birmingham-Southern College was created on November 27, 1917 by an agreement to merge Southern University in Greensboro, Hale County, and Birmingham College in Birmingham, Jefferson County. This agreement was made between the Alabama and the North Alabama Conferences of the Methodist Church, which had respectively built and nurtured these separate institutions but could no longer afford to maintain them. A formal Declaration of Merger was published on May 30, 1918. Neither city wished to give up its college, but a decision had to be made and in the course of things Birmingham won out, and the first of the combined classes arrived on the muddy Hilltop on September 11, 1918. It is appropriate to say that in this, as in other aspects of Alabama's history, coal won out over cotton.

Southern University had been founded in 1856 to provide a classical education, with a strong religious component, primarily to planters' sons and especially those with ministerial ambitions.¹ In fact, ministers' sons and ministerial students did not pay tuition—a factor contributing in no small way to Southern's constant financial struggles. Another contributing factor was the sole solicitation of support from the Methodist Conference and churches, whose modest subscriptions were never enough to adequately maintain the plant and salaries. After an auspicious beginning, the Civil War decimated the student population and demoralized the faculty, who always seemed to be last party to be paid in the struggle to keep the university going.

Birmingham College began life on the Hilltop in 1897, five years after the initiation of a call by the North Alabama Conference to establish an institution in the Birmingham area. It was brought to fruition largely through the determination of three Methodist churchmen who were active with the North Alabama Conference. Primary among these was the presiding officer the Reverend Anson West, who was a prominent minister and later renowned as a chronicler of Alabama Methodist History.² The other two were the Reverend Edgar Massilon Glenn (originally from the old Russell County town of Glennville, which was named after his father and is now nearly disappeared) and the Reverend Zachariah A. Parker, named the first President of what was then known as the North Alabama Conference College, who had up to that time been President of Athens Female College.³ Ministers all, the College was founded "as a preacher's college with all the strengths and weaknesses that went with such a classification."⁴ As was the case with Southern University, concentration on religious education and Classical studies, solely supported by the Conference and some of its churches, resulted in a year-to-year struggle to attract students and maintain the physical institution and faculty.

The siting of the College was a fortunate confluence of idealistic vision with real estate interests. The visionary was Rose Wellington Owen, Methodist layman, businessman and land owner from West Jefferson County whose family home still stands along the Eastern Valley Road near Bessemer. Owen had in 1892 purchased a large tract of land west of Birmingham, some of which ran along Flint Ridge with a fine view across Jones Valley. Some of these holdings, now bordering the College to the south, he subsequently subdivided into lots and streets and called Owenton. Having envisioned a college on the heights of his mountain holdings, he promoted the process by donating to the North Alabama Conference the first 15 acres in 1897, and in the following year soliciting the donation of an additional 65 from among the local

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Birmingham-Southern College
Jefferson County, Alabama

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landholders. Among the donors was Col. Thomas Greene Bush, President of the Highland Land Company and developer of Bush Hills, the neighborhood adjacent to the College to the south and west. When it opened in 1898 there was one building, Rose Owen Hall, and the school was known as Owenton College.

Still struggling as a Methodist Conference college, the name was changed to Birmingham College in 1906 not least as an attempt to broaden its appeal to the general public and students of other denominations. During this period as well, one of the College's ablest friends and benefactors began his long career of service: Robert S. Munger was a Birmingham industrialist, real estate developer and ardent churchman who devoted not only his fortune but his time and energy to keeping the College afloat in lean times and ever more progressive in good ones. Mr. Munger and his fellow industrialist William Herbert Stockham, and their devoted wives, had much to do with the expansion of the College's fortunes and the construction of its historic buildings.

In 1907 the Presidency of the College went to James H. McCoy, formerly editor of the *Alabama Christian Advocate* and another of the prominent Methodists who had been instrumental in the location of a college at Birmingham. Under his administration the idea of combining Southern University and Birmingham College was promoted in earnest, and the long effort begun to make this a reality. President McCoy also began to broaden the financial base of the College by appealing to the wider business community, an endeavor founded on the good precedent of the Munger contributions.⁵

He knew that the great need of the College was money. By appealing to civic pride and welfare he hoped to tap the industrial wealth of the Birmingham area. By combining Birmingham College and Southern University, if such could be done, he hoped to gain the united support of the Methodist Church. He began work on both of these plans even before he took office as president.⁶

In 1910 President McCoy was made a Bishop, and he was succeeded in the presidency of the College by John D. Simpson. In 1911 the *Advocate* was reporting that a fund drive to improve the physical campus found one administration building (Rose Owen), a training school for teachers, and three dormitories, all except Owen of frame construction.⁷ President Simpson resigned in 1916 to return to preaching, and a brief but significant presidency succeeded: significant for the fact that, for the first time, the elected president, Thornwell Haynes, was not a minister but a layman and professional educator with some-- appropriately-- diplomatic experience. His administration saw the completion of the next major building project, a science building designed in 1915 by William T. Warren for placement on the newly marked quadrangle.⁸ This structure of restrained academic Classicism, known originally as Science Hall and later as Ramsay, was sited in front of Rose Owen to the east, perpendicular to the old building and facing the quadrangle. Its destruction in 1986 to make way for the Marguerite Jones Harbert Building dictates that the NR district boundary on that side ends at that point.

With many students gone to military training or war service work and with financial conditions still harsh, both colleges opened in 1917 with outward optimism and inward discouragement.⁹ In October, the North Alabama Conference in session at Woodlawn adopted resolutions favoring the merging of Birmingham College with Southern University. The following month, the Alabama Conference likewise

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voted for merger, and in May of 1918 arrangements were completed and the union of the institutions consummated.¹⁰ Birmingham-Southern College therefore opened in September of 1918 with much ballyhoo and a dinner on the grounds; the first classes comprised a combined student body that reached 185 by the end of the year. The first president of the new institution was Cullen Coleman Daniel, formerly president of Southern. Enrollment and financial support were slow in developing further, however, and after several years of struggle and fund-raising, the exhausted Daniel resigned in January of 1921.

With the advent to the presidency in 1921 of Dr. Guy Everett Snavely, what might be called the modern history of Birmingham-Southern College begins. Dr. Snavely was a Marylander educated at Johns Hopkins, with graduate study in educational administration at Columbia; he served as a professor of Romance Languages at Allegheny College, and went from Allegheny to Converse College to serve as Dean. Lured to Birmingham from Converse after two years, he was given up in South Carolina with regret:

You have secured a prize in Dr. Snavely. . . . We tried to keep him but failed. He is a sincere Christian gentleman; well equipped scholar and social genius; is full of practical ideas and efficient in executing them. As a co-operator he has no superior. Give him a free hand and back him to the limit.¹¹

For the College, perhaps the most significant attributes above noted are "practical" and "efficient." Dr. Snavely appealed to the industrial wealth of Birmingham for support, he postulated "education for service," implying an expansion of the curriculum for vocational, teaching, and arts education. He began a physical improvement of the College grounds, clearing trees and even a few briar patches; he improved, with the financial help of Mr. Munger, the athletic field; he had the campus sodded and landscaped for the first time, and had gravel paths laid with slag from Sloss-Sheffield Steel & Iron Co.¹²

The first of Dr. Snavely's years was marked as well by expansion of program and recognition. In line with the President's belief in education for service, a department was created offering evening and Saturday courses and establishing a summer session. Briefly, a law department was established, subsequently discontinued (at the insistence of the University of Alabama) in order for the College to attain membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The Methodist Church's Board of Education raised the College's rating to A, and it was elected to membership in the Association of American Colleges. These associational distinctions were the result of an increase in both intellectual and financial capital: a strengthened faculty and enlarged endowment.

Educational and physical progress was ongoing in the 1920s. Omicron Delta Kappa installed a chapter on BSC's campus in 1924, and in the same year the educational honorary society Kappa Phi Kappa was installed. In 1925, the College was accepted into the Association of American Universities and the American Association of University Women. With the help of the Carnegie Endowment, the Library grew so extensively that by 1934 a stack addition to Phillips Library was necessary (see Inventory).

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The period of building delineated here by the Period of Significance began with Dr. Snavely's advent to the College. Pressure for classroom space was relieved by the construction of the College High School (1923-24), subsequently named after former President John D. Simpson. The other early building is the M. Paul Phillips Library (1923), possible through the contribution of Birmingham lumberman Phillips, who also left funds in his will for what would be Phillips Science Building (1951). Student effort for subscriptions and support from other donors made possible the construction of the Student Activities Building, completed in 1925; suffering damage from a 1927 fire, it was rebuilt shortly thereafter. (Subsequent expansion and the present fronting of the Norton Student Center render this building invisible in terms of the District, but the rear and portions of the sides can be seen from the south hill.) Gifts from the Stockham family built the President's House on the south slope of the Hilltop (1925); prior to its completion President Snavely and his family stayed in one of the frame dormitories.

The years 1927 to the end of the decade were great building years for Birmingham in general, and BSC's built history at this time reflects the overall optimism of the period. After completion of the President's House and Student Activities Building, the next project was a flagship administration building to replace Rose Owen Hall. The reliably generous Munger family, in this particular case Mrs. Munger, had given \$250,000 for construction of such a building; unfortunately, she did not live to see it finished. It was built on the site of the landmark Rose Owen at the crown of the Hilltop, its colossal porticoes facing in both directions-- one down the drive to Eighth Avenue and the 1927 class gates, and the other across Owen Quadrangle to the valley to the north.

Interestingly, with all the building accomplished, Birmingham-Southern was still lacking classroom space-- understandable, perhaps, in the context of vastly increased curriculum and ever-expanding student enrollment. The BSC alumni were interested in subscribing funds for a classroom building in honor of the late Frank W. Brandon, a graduate of the first class at Birmingham College and later a faculty member, instrumental in the joining of the Colleges into one. A February, 1930 alumni publication commented that "(a) decade hence, alumni will marvel that in the year 1930 so much difficulty was experienced in providing a classroom building for Birmingham-Southern College. . . . There is no classroom building on the campus now. Classes are held in such rooms and buildings scattered over the grounds as are available."¹³ Parks and Weaver note that "(t)he depression ruined the prospects for the proposed Brandon Building, but Mrs. Stockham donated \$75,000 for a woman's building."¹⁴

The cornerstone of Stockham Woman's Building was laid on the occasion of the 75th anniversary celebration in the spring of 1931 (actually 75 years from the opening of Southern University in Greensboro, Hale County, in 1856); by September it was complete, standing on the south slope of the hill where formerly the three frame dormitories had been. With the completion of Stockham, building was to cease for the remainder of the decade; not until 1940 would there be any new structure on the campus, when the gymnasium opposite Munger at the other end of the quadrangle was built. Also during the Depression, Simpson School was closed as a cost-cutting measure; vacant until 1940, it was leased to the Birmingham Conservatory of Music and remained its home (and after its 1953 incorporation into the College, the Music Department's home) until the construction of Hill Recital Hall in 1966. After that date Simpson has been put to use as the headquarters of College maintenance operations.

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In 1938, having gamely held at bay the worst ravages of the Depression, Guy Snavely left Birmingham-Southern to become Executive Secretary of the Association of American Colleges. College historians Robert Corley and Samuel Stayer have emphasized again one of his particular legacies:

During the seventeen years that Guy Snavely served the College as President, Birmingham-Southern grew from a small struggling college to a nationally respected institution . . . Of the many lessons taught by President Snavely, the most important was that the survival of church-related liberal arts colleges hinged on their ability to escape from their dependence upon church funding and to tap the financial resources and good will of their surrounding communities.¹⁵

A great deal of academic success and further growth have followed his tenure, in a successful balance of Methodist Church association and community involvement and support. Crowning all accomplishments has been, perhaps, the College's 1996 designation by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of the best liberal arts colleges in the United States. Certainly this may be the most publicly spectacular recognition, but BSC's consistent reputation for academic excellence has made such a designation appropriate.

Under the presidency of Neal R. Berte that began in 1976, Birmingham-Southern has experienced a run of progress and physical expansion not unlike that under Guy Snavely. The present nomination of the historic campus to the National Register is partly a recognition by this administration of the role that continuity and tradition play in the maintenance of an institution's life. It also implies a recognition of the value to the present generations of their inheritance from past ones, both in terms of academic and social traditions and of architectural place-making.

At the time of the 75th anniversary of Birmingham-Southern in 1931, a summary of his accomplishments was offered framed in the still-florid rhetoric of public discourse. In light of the College's history of struggles and accomplishments, however, and because so much of the physical and academic evidence is still with us to corroborate it, the statement of T.H. Jack, former President of the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools of the Southern States, is appropriate: "The greatest piece of constructive work in the field of college education in the South during the past ten years has been done at Birmingham-Southern College by President Snavely."¹⁶

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Notes

¹Joseph H. Parks & Oliver C. Weaver, *Birmingham-Southern College, 1856-1956*. Nashville, The Parthenon Press, 1957, p. 89.

²*Ibid.*, p. 133. Reverend West wrote *History of Methodism in Alabama* (originally published 1893), a work valuable to researchers in the histories of old church properties.

³*Ibid.*, p. 132.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 134.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 145; also Robert G. Corley & Samuel N. Stayer, *View From the Hilltop: The First 125 Years of Birmingham-Southern College*. Birmingham Publishing Company, 1981, p. 19.

⁶Parks & Weaver, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 154.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 155.

⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 168-69 *passim*; also "Southern's lineage goes back to 1857," *Birmingham News*, December 19, 1971, p. C-76.

¹⁰Parks & Weaver, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-71 *passim*.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 177, quoting President R.P. Pell of Converse College, originally quoted in the *Alabama Christian Advocate*, April 28, 1921.

¹²Corley & Stayer, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

¹³K.E. Cooper, "The Price of Progress," *The Hilltop Alumnus*, February, 1930, p. 6

¹⁴Parks & Weaver, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

¹⁵Corley & Stayer, *op. cit.*, pp. 47,51.

¹⁶Quoted on the cover, *Hilltop Alumnus*, Vol I, No. 3, August, 1931.

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Major Bibliographical References

Corley, Robert G. & Stayer, Samuel N., *View From the Hilltop: The First 125 Years of Birmingham-Southern College*. Birmingham Publishing Company, 1981. A good pictorial history of the College.

Parks, Joseph H. & Weaver, Oliver C., *Birmingham-Southern College, 1856-1956*. Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1957. This is generally accepted as the scholarly history of the College.

Birmingham-Southern College Archives, Rush Learning Center at the College. The collection is extensive and provided much in the way of documents, drawings, old College and Alumni Bulletins, etc.

Birmingham Public Library, clipping files in the Tutwiler Collection of Southern and Women's History, Birmingham, Alabama.

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Verbal Boundary Description

Boundaries are as indicated on the attached map. A verbal description is included in paragraph 2 of the Description of Physical Appearance.

Boundary Justification

Boundaries of the nominated district are based on the original portions of the campus that include the literal Hilltop and that portion of the land along Eighth Avenue West where Simpson Preparatory School and the class gates are located. The south and east boundaries are natural ones, being roads; the north and west boundaries are drawn to exclude, on the west, historically unbuilt land, and, on the north, that portion of the campus occupied almost exclusively by buildings of more recent vintage, excepting only the 1940 gymnasium, a building now so separated from the core of the historic campus that it cannot be included.

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Description of Photographs

Photographs of Birmingham-Southern College, historic campus, Jefferson County, Alabama.
All photographs except the final one taken May, 1998; 1930 class gates photo taken November, 1998 by Linda Nelson; negatives in possession of the Alabama Historical Commission.

1. M. Paul Phillips Library/Administration, partial facade and north wall, from NW. (This building was not photographed straight on because a large tree obscures a good portion of the facade from that angle.)
2. Phillips Library, south elevation, from S.
3. Phillips Library, rear of building from SE, showing 1934 stack addition. (Harbert, the building replacing Old Science/Ramsay, is seen on the extreme right of the photograph.)
4. Phillips Library, detail of facade: central entry portico, from W.
5. Phillips Library, interior, main vestibule under rotunda, from N.
6. Phillips Library, detail of skylight in rotunda.
7. Munger Memorial Hall, quadrangle (north) facade, from N.
8. Munger, south facade facing Eighth Avenue West, from S.
9. Munger, east elevation, from E.
10. Munger, west elevation, from W.
11. Munger, view of south facade and west wall from SW.
12. Munger, interior, ground-floor stair in west side entry vestibule.
13. Munger, interior, landing and stairs, west stairwell, from S.
14. Munger, detail of ground-floor auditorium, from WSW.
15. Stockham Woman's Building, north facade, from N.
16. Stockham, south facade, from SSW.
17. Stockham, west elevation, from W.

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Description of Photographs, continued:

18. Stockham, east elevation, from E.
19. Stockham, detail of north entry, from N.
20. Stockham, ground-floor reception room (Stockham parlor), from W
21. M. Paul Phillips Science Building, facade from quadrangle, from E.
22. Phillips Science, rear and north side of building, from N.
23. Phillips Science, west elevation, from W.
24. Phillips Science: Elton Bryson Stephens Laboratory addition on south side, from SE.
25. Phillips Science, interior, ground-floor corridor, from N.
26. President's House, facade, from S (Eight Avenue West behind camera).
27. President's House, west elevation, from W.
28. President's House, rear elevation, from N.
29. Simpson Preparatory School, facade, from across Eighth Avenue West, from SW.
30. Simpson, east elevation, from E.
31. Simpson, east elevation, from SSE.
32. Simpson, west elevation, from NW.
33. Simpson, rear elevation, from ENE.
34. Simpson, facade detail of entry bay, from S.
35. Simpson, window detail on east elevation, from E.

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Description of Photographs, continued:

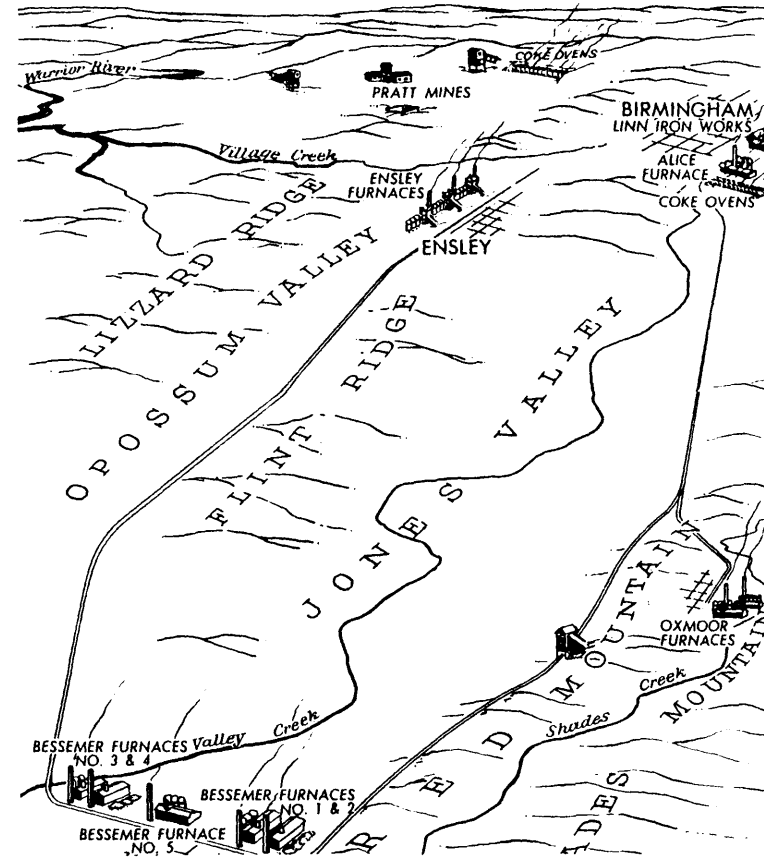
36. Class of 1927 gates and Munger Memorial Hall in background, from S.
37. Class of 1930 gates, from S.
38. Class of 1930 gates, detail, from SW (Stockham Woman's Building in background).

BIRMINGHAM AREA 1899

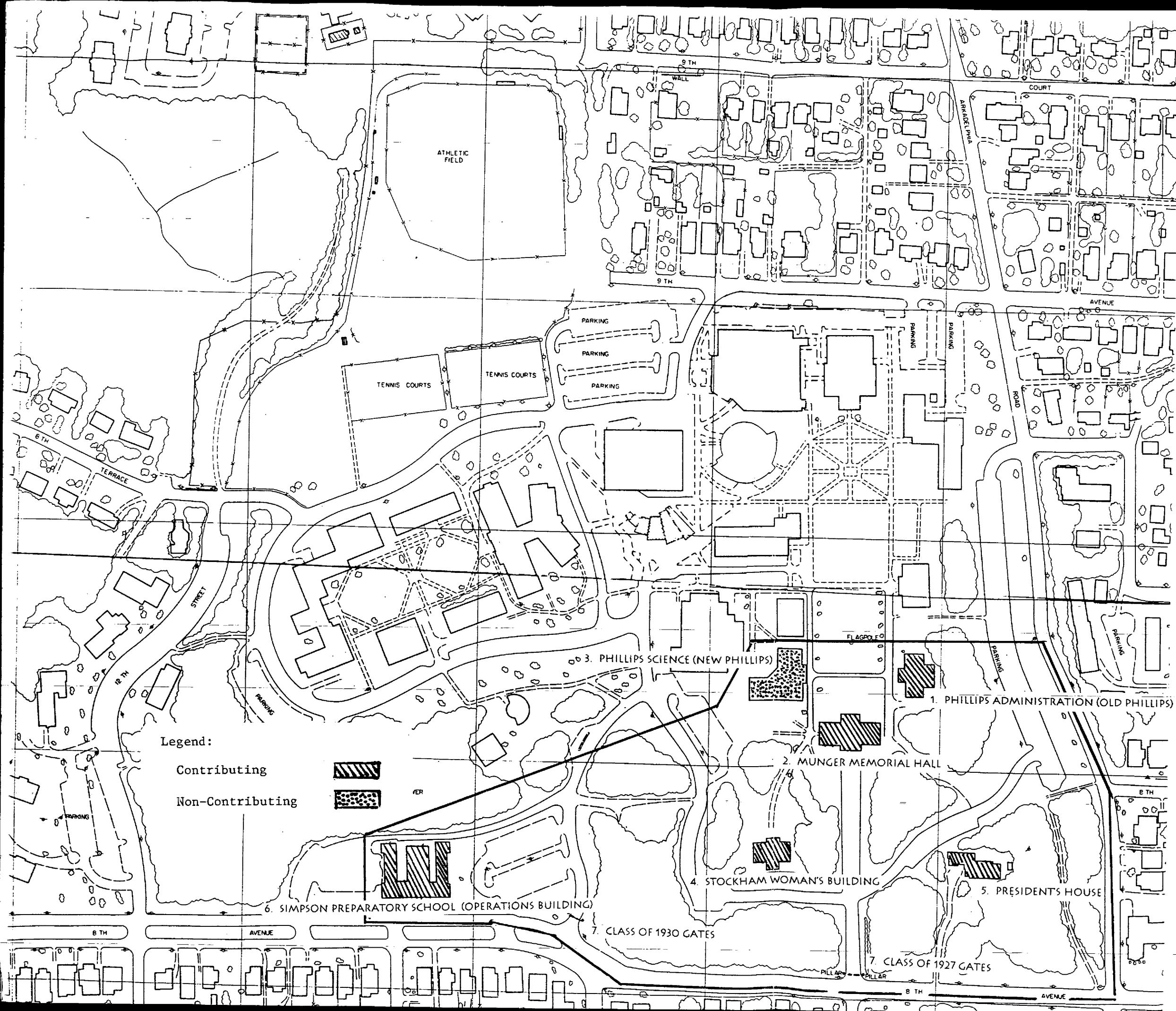
Drawing showing relationship of Flint Ridge to Red Mountain, west of Birmingham.

From Biography of a Business, Tennessee Coal & Iron Division, United States Steel Corporation, 1960, p. 27.

BIRMINGHAM SOUTHERN COLLEGE
BIRMINGHAM, JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA



The year 1899 was a historic one for both TCI and the Birmingham district. Having moved to Alabama from Tennessee some 13 years before, TCI had put together a complex of mining, coking and iron manufacturing facilities and had built the district's first commercial steel plant. First steel flowed from TCI's furnaces just weeks before the turn of the century.



Old Campus, Birmingham-Southern College
 Birmingham, Alabama
 Source: Birmingham Planimetric Map
 Scale: 1 inch equals 200 feet

1927 Whitson map of the campus; inset is Mr. and Mrs. Robert S. Munger. Copied from Corley & Stayer, View from the Hilltop, p. 45.

BIRMINGHAM-SOUTHERN COLLEGE, BIRMINGHAM, JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA

