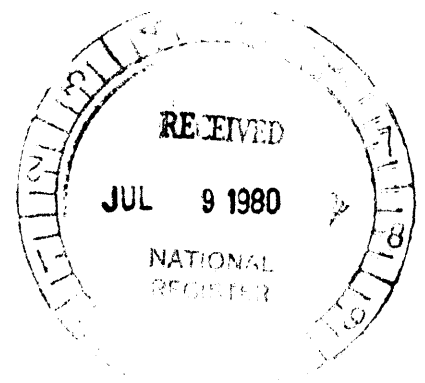


12. BECKERS BLOCK
105-111 North Jefferson Street

Huntsville Land Company
Ira Terry
P. O. Box 798
Huntsville, Alabama 35804



North part of Block 10 and south part of Block 2, Old Town;
124' (Jefferson) X 100'
16 537810 3843150

1925: Architect/Builder unknown

DESCRIPTION

This structure is composed of five identical, one-story brick bays of slightly varying width. Each bay is defined by a channeled pier which extends above the cornice, while the center portion of each bay is raised; these treatments convey a crenelated appearance to the entire block. The cornice is accented by vertically laid brick, and the upper facade wall of each bay features a rectangular panel formed by headers. The dark brown brick of both the parapet and the piers is relieved by small squares of inlaid cream-colored stone. The ground level had a small display window at either side standing on a low tiled base; these windows angled back to a central, recessed entrance, which created a large, sheltered entryway for window shopping. Inside, Becker's retains the original hardwood floors and mezzanine. This portion of the block was erected for Penney's and apparently was not altered when Becker's took it over.

Although the other bays have been modified at the street level, the highly animated upper facade survives which gives a distinctive unity and identity to the whole. Restoration would be a simple matter of removing the applied signage and wood siding to expose the original brick facade.

SIGNIFICANCE

Beckers is a fully developed example of the Commercial Brick style as evidenced by its strong horizontal orientation, its stepped parapet, its combination of brown brick and cream-colored stone, and its reliance on structural materials and composition to achieve its decorative effect. This one block illustrates most of the methods employed by the Commercial Brick style to impart a decorative surface to the structure without introducing applied ornamental features; the brick is laid vertically and as headers to create panels, channels, and edgings, which are further emphasized by the contrasting flush stonework.

BECKERS BLOCK
105-111 North Jefferson Street
Huntsville, Alabama

Continuation:

Alterations have been made to the three northern units, but even here the upper wall has not been disturbed. The southern two units have not been changed except for fitting a sign within the brick framework and painting the gold tile beneath the display windows; even the interior has survived in original condition.

Beckers embodies the specific traits of the Commercial Brick style as practiced during the 1920s and is one of the most distinctive examples of the style in Huntsville. It is further significant by reason of its scale, configuration, construction, materials, and age.

