IDENTIFICATION

PROPERTY NAME: The Empire Building

HISTORIC NAME: "Columbus Investment Co. Bldg."

and "The Murrah Bldg."

STREET ADDRESS: 21 12th Street

CITY: Columbus

COUNTY: Muscogee

PRESENT OWNER: Columbus Realty Co.

ATTN: President

MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 2707

CITY: Columbus

STATE: Georgia

ZIP CODE: 31902

CURRENT USE: Commercial office building

ACREAGE: Less than one acre

U.S.G.S. QUADRANGLE: Columbus, GA-AL

U.T.M. REFERENCE: 16-688695-3593970

V.B.D. OR TAX MAP NUMBER: 4/7/1

I. DESCRIPTION

HISTORY

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND PRESENT CONDITION: Neo-Classical Revival; five stories, rectangular, flat roof; balloon framing system with exterior material of granite on first floor and stretcher bond brick on upper floors, composition roof, building details consist of alternating smooth and rusticated granite first floor, flat arch window lintels, projecting semi-circular bay on first through third floor at street corner has 1/2 engaged columns, second floor has arched radiating vousseir, remainder of floors have flat arches, each two bays is divided by a two-story pilaster with corinthian capital which on the third floor support an organically patterned pressed metal frieze and on the fifth floor a complete

ORIGINAL OWNER: Columbus Investment Co.

ORIGINAL USE: Commercial Office Building

ARCHITECT/BUILDER:

HISTORIC ACREAGE:

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1896

DATE(S) OF ALTERATIONS:

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE (FROM ORIGINS TO PRESENT): This building was first known as the "Columbus Investment Co. Bldg.," although by 1910 it was being called "The Murrah Bldg." Around 1958, the building was named "The Empire Bldg." Since its construction, this "downtown" commercial building has housed offices of various businesses and professionals.

.SIGNIFICANCE

N.R. AREA(S) OF SIGNIFICANCE: Local History, Architecture, LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: Local Commerce

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL): Local History: This building is significant as it housed offices of late-19th century local professionals (including attorneys at law, dentists, architects), cotton buyers, and a business college. All of the preceding were occupants of the building immediately following its completion.

Architecture: This building, significant to Columbus as one of the first "high rise".

buildings, seems to draw its neo-classical design from the Renaissance Revival architecture made popular during the "Chicago Exposition." The building has excellent detailing in its 3rd and 5th floor entablatures, showing fine craftsmanship. The frieze of the 3rd floor (CONT.

FORM PREPARED BY: a)

) Nancy Alexander Roger Harris

ORGANIZATION: a) Lower Chattahoochee APDC
b) Historic Columbus Foundation

b) Janice P. Biggers
ADDRESS: a) P. O. Box 1908, Cols, GA 31994 TELEPHONE NUMBER: a) (404)324-4221

b) 700 Broadway, Cols, GA 31901

b) (404)322-0756

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS: Historic Structures Field Survey: Columbus-Muscogee County, Georgia. 1976 state survey, Historic Preservation Section, DNR, Atlanta, Georgia. SOURCES OF INFORMATION: Columbus City Directories (1896-1958).

Terra cotta work above the 12th Street entrance to the building.

SOURCES

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PHOTOGRAPHER:

Nancy Alexander

DATE: 3 June, 1980

FRAME NO. 13A NEGATIVES FILED: Historic Columbus Foundation ROLL NO. 10

700 Broadway

DIRECTION PHOTOGRAPHER FACING: Northwest

Columbus, Georgia 31901

USE SPACE BELOW FOR CONTINUATION FROM FRONT, SKETCH PLANS OR MAPS, ADDITIONAL COMMENTS, ETC.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION: entablature with modillions, main first floor entrance on 12th Street boasts terra cotta work around second floor palladian windows; situated in Central Business District with one 4-story building and primarily two and three story buildings around it; no landscaping, fair condition.

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: entablature is Sullivanesque in its organic nature. Commercial: Serving since about 1896 as a commercial office building, the Empire Building has become a local landmark, one of the tallest buildings in Columbus, it has housed the offices of numerous leading doctors, lawyers and businessmen.