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Ala. Historical Commission

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NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 10-90)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Whitman, Edward Fenns, House

other names/site number Boaz Bed and Breakfast

2. Location

street & number 200 Thomas Avenue not for publication N/A  
city or town Boaz vicinity N/A  
state Alabama code AL county Marshall code 095 zip code 35957

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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] 8/21/97  
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):

[Signature] Date of Action 8/26/97  
Signature of the Keeper

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

USDI/NPS Registration Form

Property Name Whitman, Edward Fenns, House

County and State Marshall - Alabama

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check only one box.)

Category of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- [X] private
[ ] public-local
[ ] public-state
[ ] public-Federal

- [x] building(s)
[ ] district
[ ] site
[ ] structure
[ ] object

Contributing Noncontributing
\_2\_ \_0\_ buildings
sites
structures
objects
\_2\_ \_0\_ Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: single dwelling
Domestic secondary structure

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: single dwelling
Domestic secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Craftsman

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
roof terra cotta
walls brick
other

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition on continuation sheet/s.) (See 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.
[x] 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)

Architecture
[Blank lines for additional categories]

Period of Significance 1924

Significant Dates 1924

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Welton, William Leslie

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

- 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:
[x] State Historic Preservation Office
[ ] Other state agency
[ ] Federal agency
[ ] Local government
[ ] University
[ ] Other
Name of repository

USDI/NPS Registration Form

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**10. Geographical Data**  
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**Acreage of Property** .5 acre

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

Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing  
1 16 577240 37844403 \_\_\_\_\_  
2 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ 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 Pamela Sterne King/Historic Preservation Consultant & Trina Binkley, AHC Reviewer  
organization N/A date 5/5/97  
street & number 3307 Altaloma Way telephone 823-1679  
city or town Birmingham state Alabama zip code 35216

=====  
**Additional Documentation**  
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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 Faye Markham  
street & number 200 Thomas Avenue telephone 205-593-8031  
city or town Boaz state AL zip code 35957

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**7. Narrative Description:**

The Whitman - Hunt House is a two - story plus basement brown brick Craftsman house. It has a wide L - shaped wide front/side porch that extends into a porte cochere. The porch also has a beaded board ceiling and glazed tile floor; there are decorative cement scuppers along the porch wall throughout. There is clay tile roofing throughout and twin front roof gables with clay finials above the second floor windows. The roofing above the porch entrance is adorned with two sets of wood knee braces; the window gables are supported by exposed wood structural elements. There are also exposed wood rafters along both rooflines. Five cement steps lead to the house which are flanked by brick cheek walls; both the cheek wall and the porch wall have limestone caps. A series of eight massive brick porch piers support the porch and porte cochere. A small crenellated balcony is located along the second floor directly above the main entrance of the porch. Leading from the second floor balcony to the interior is an original wood door with 12 lights flanked by 4:1 double hung wood windows. Beneath each gable are double 6:1 double hung wood windows. The first floor front entrance consists of a 15 light wood front door flanked by 5 pane sidelights; there is also a 9 light transom. Flanking this entranceway, directly beneath the second floor gables is a central wood 8:1 window flanked by 4:1 wood windows. All windows have limestone sills.

The east facade of the house has a gabled dormer with 6 vertical lights and a vertical wood vent; it also has a tile roof and finial, and original wood windows remain, as well as an iron basement window. Along the first floor just beyond the porte cochere are two vertical 4:1 windows separated by a chimney shaft; beneath one window is a decorative metal grilled vent. In the center of this facade is a secondary recessed entrance with an original wood door. There is a bracked wood shed awning with a tile roof above the entrance. To the right of this entrance are three 6:1 wood windows, two of which are identical and one which is smaller. Beneath the 6:1 window closest to the rear corner of the building is a iron basement window with three vertical panes. Also, along the second floor is a series of five 6:1 wood windows all of which are identical except a smaller one directly above the secondary entrance.

The rear facade has a gabled dormer identical to those on each side facade. Along the first floor are two sets of double 6:1 double hung wood windows separated by a rear entrance which was added c. 1992. There is also an original secondary entrance that leads into the kitchen bay which retains its original screen door. Adjacent to this door is a vertical 1:1 wood stationery window above which is a wood vent. There is also a metal downspout and scupper. Along the second

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floor above the original entry into the "mud room," there is a set of three 8:1 double hung wood windows with limestone sills. To the west is a series of three 6:1 identical double hung wood windows. Along the basement level is an iron window with three vertical panes.

The west facade has a gabled dormer identical to the other two. Along the wall of the rear "mud room," there is a wood double hung 4:1 window; adjacent is a set of three wood double hung 6:1 windows. Beneath this set is a series of three iron basement windows with three vertical panes. There is a dining room bay which has one 4:1 double hung wood window on each side wall, and a large window on its main facade consisting of a central 8:1 window flanked by 4:1 double hung wood windows. Along the second floor are two pairs of double 8:1 double hung wood windows, and three 6:1 wood double hung windows. Along the chimney and perpendicular to the front porch's tiled roof, there is a tiled eave extension.

Interior:

The interior has plaster walls and ceilings throughout. There is a central hallway with original wood stairs and rail. Two rooms open off the central hall on each side; to the rear of the stairs is a breakfast room with built in wood cabinets with paned doors. There is also a secondary hallway perpendicular to the main hall. The left side of the hallway opens onto the living room *via* double hinged, four - door, 15 pane, wood French doors where there is a decorative brick fireplace with a central inset panel with a plastered cast, and there is a limestone mantel. There is a 15 pane wood door leading from the living room onto the side porch of the main porch. The living room leads into the dining room. The dining room leads into the kitchen/pantry which leads into a "mud" room which has 6" red quarry tile floor. There is an original Ilgair exhaust fan in the kitchen. A secondary hallway leads from the kitchen into the breakfast room, to a bedroom with a tile and wood fireplace, and to stairs leading to the basement. To the right of the main hall, directly opposite of the living room, is the library which contains a fireplace nearly identical -- but with a different plaster cast, and original brass sconces. Identical French doors open into the library.

On the second floor there are four bedrooms. Three have wood and ceramic tile inset panel; two fireplaces are identical, and one has a plaster bas relief garland. All bedrooms retain original beveled mirrors on the closet doors, and all retain original brass sconces. From the second floor

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landing, French doors lead directly into the sewing room which exits onto the second floor balcony. There is also a sleeping room bounded on two sides by operable double hung wood windows. There are two original bathrooms on the second floor with original herringbone black/white ceramic tile; there is also a modern bathroom (c. 1980) on the first floor which was converted from a hall closet.

The original attic remains intact and is used as a bedroom. There is also a storage area under the attic eaves. The basement has plaster walls and a concrete floor with wood trussed ceiling. The basement was originally used as the laundry room such that there is a vertical wood post with wood extensions that was built on which to dry clothes; the post remains but the extensions were cut back c. 1940s to prevent danger to the household children.

Throughout the interior of the two - story main portion of the house there are the following features: 4" crown molding, oak floors except in the kitchen and attic where there is pine flooring, plaster walls and ceilings, original brass light fixtures and sconces except in the main first floor hallway where a brass chandelier was installed c. 1940s, plated brass with milk or clear glass door knobs.

Garage: There is a c. 1924 one - story open two - car wood garage just to the rear of the house. It has a pitched roof, concrete foundation, and exposed rafter tails.

Archaeological Component

Although no formal archaeological survey has been made of this building area, the potential for subsurface remains is high. Buried portions may contain significant information that may be useful in interpreting the entire area.

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**8. Statement of Significance: Criterion C (Architecture)**

The Edward Fenns Whitman House is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C as the finest example of Craftsman architecture in Boaz, Alabama. Its rectilinear form, massive horizontal front gabled roofline, porch and roof tiles, prominent porches and porch piers, exposed roof rafters, and decorative knee braces are reflective of the Craftsman style. The interior floor plan and austere living spaces, simple stair, prominent first floor rectilinear brick fireplaces, use of glazed tile, and brass sconces also reflect the Craftsman style. Constructed in 1924, the Whitman House is representative of the tail - end of the height of the Craftsman movement in Alabama.

**Statement of Significance: Criterion C (Work of a Master)**

The Whitman House is also eligible under Criterion C as an example of the work of a master architect, William Leslie Welton. Welton, a prominent Birmingham architect, was one of Alabama's most significant designers of the Craftsman style working in the first decades of the twentieth century. From 1910 to 1924, he designed some of the most outstanding and stylized commercial structures, institutional buildings, and public spaces in Birmingham. Welton's residential designs in Birmingham were predominately Craftsman - styled, ranging from working class bungalow to middle class dwelling to magnificent mansion. Welton also designed significant residences in Tuscaloosa, Greensboro, and Boaz. The Edward Fenns Whitman House is an excellent example of Welton's prototypical style with its rectilinear form, massive horizontal front gabled roofline, porch and roof tiles, prominent porches and porch piers, and decorative wood elements, as well as simple interior floor plan, living spaces, and detailing. It is the only documented William Leslie Welton House in Boaz and stands as one of his last documented designs.



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**Historical Development**

The town of Boaz is located atop Sand Mountain in north Alabama in the southeastern corner of Marshall County which is northeast of Jefferson County and just north of Blount County. The history of the Edward Fenns Whitman House reflects the economic development of Boaz and its concomitant social and physical growth beginning in the 1920s. From its earliest days of pioneering settlement between c. 1844 and 1860, settlers arrived in this southeastern corner of Marshall County, Alabama to homestead. From 1860 - 77, the Civil War and Reconstruction virtually ended this migration. By the late 1870s, settlers again came to Sand Mountain to escape the vagaries of war, defeat, and poverty to begin life anew. One such settler, Billy Sparks, arrived in 1878 from Butte County, Georgia with visions of a new town. After purchasing 500 acres from his nephew in what would eventually become downtown Boaz, he offered to give a lot to anyone who would erect a building, or to anyone who bought a lot. Eventually, Sparks gave land for the First Baptist Church, first public school, first store, and cemetery. <sup>1</sup>

In 1886, town leaders of what had become known as Sparks Town, petitioned the federal government for a Post Office requesting the name of "Carlyle," a village several miles away. When they discovered that they could not use "Carlyle," they searched for another name, decided on the Biblical name of Boaz, and petitioned the government again. By 1889, Boaz had its first school, first doctor, and two stores. <sup>2</sup> In 1891, moreover, rumor had it that a railroad was to be constructed through Boaz. That same year, cotton broker, Edward Fenns Whitman moved from Guntersville, Alabama to Boaz and, with his father, opened a mercantile business. <sup>3</sup>

News of the railroad spurred Boaz's first construction and economic boom which continued almost without interruption until the Great Depression set in. By then, Boaz had established itself as the area's primary trading center. In addition to Whitman's store, John H. Snead (for which Snead College would later be named), R. R. McCleskey, and J. G. Snellgrove all established mercantile and general stores in 1891. By 1892, the Nashville Chattanooga and St.

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<sup>1</sup>Alexander, Jo, The History of Boaz, Alabama, Boaz Chamber of Commerce, c. 1970, p. 1 - 4.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Wright, Lucile Snellgrove, Boaz Builds By Biographies, Boaz: Boaz Printing Company, 1983, pp. 374 - 75.

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Louis (N.C. & St. L) Railroad and depot were completed in the heart of Boaz, and E. F. Whitman was named its first agent. Whitman also completed construction of his new warehouse that year where he sold guano and railroad crossties. By 1893, Boaz's first hotel, Mann's Hotel, was built and its first newspaper established; and by year's end, Boaz had ten stores, one depot, one warehouse, a sawmill, cotton gin, grist mill and planer, wood and blacksmith shop, photograph gallery, two churches, a school, and 27 places of residence. <sup>4</sup>

In 1896, the town of Boaz was incorporated and E. F. Whitman was elected Mayor and drew up the town charter. By 1900, Boaz had a population of 253, and business and construction continued to boom. Two years later, the Boaz Cotton Oil Company was organized and built, and in 1904 E. F. Whitman took over as secretary - treasurer of the company. In 1906 he established the Boaz Fertilizer Company, the town's first fertilizer company which only remained in business a few years. <sup>5</sup>

Whitman's primary business interest, however, remained with the Boaz Cotton Oil Company. By 1909, the company's payroll was \$5000.00, employees were paid in cash, and farmers were being paid \$65,000 annually for their cottonseed. The business was hailed as a primary reason that Boaz cottonseed went from \$.25 a bushel in 1902 to \$.83 a bushel in 1909. Boaz had, by then, established itself as a significant player in the area's post - War cotton - based economy. In 1924, moreover, E. F. Whitman, as President, along with S. B. Wilson, vice president, and R. M. Miller, secretary, bought the cotton oil company back from a Mr. Hoskins who had bought the company several years earlier. In 1925, Whitman added an ice plant to his list of enterprises which would supply Boaz and Albertville with ice. In the same year (or perhaps in 1923 according to one reference ), he built the Ernestine Cotton Mill which made wrapping twine. <sup>6</sup>

Throughout the 1910s and 20s, Boaz continued to develop as a trading center. The Farmers and Merchants Bank and the Boaz Bank had been established, and its commercial base continued to diversify. In 1914, the town's first theatre, garage and jewelry store were built. That same year, it was announced that construction of State Highway 205 had been proposed and several routes were being considered. In response, according to local lore, E. F. Whitman organized a committee known as the Jackson Highway Pathfinders to politick for the road to run through Boaz. After the Pathfinders staged a stunning reception for highway planners, it is said, plans

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<sup>4</sup>Alexander, The History of Boaz, pp. 8 - 11.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 78 - 81.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 78 - 79; Wright, Boaz Builds By Biographies, p. 376.

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were concluded to do just that. Once construction was complete in 1922, the new highway became Boaz's first paved street since the building of Main Street. From then on, automobile - related industries would represent a dominating presence in the town's economy: a number of automobile dealerships, service stations, and repair stations were built during the 1920s which, in turn, spurred the construction of additional commercial enterprises. Like many other cities and towns around the country in the 1920s, Boaz's economy boomed. And, except for the years of the Great Depression, Boaz has continued to develop as one of north central Alabama's leading trading centers: during the 1940s and 50s chain stores proliferated and commercial outlet stores have dominated its economy in recent years. <sup>7</sup>

Until his retirement in 1940, E. F. Whitman remained a powerful business and political presence in Boaz. In addition to running his cottonseed oil mill, Ernestine Cotton Mill, and ice plant, Whitman was vital to the political management of Boaz serving as city councilman, and on the city and county Boards of Education. <sup>8</sup> In 1924, at the height of his, his town's, and his nation's economic boom, Whitman razed his original frame house, and built the present Edward Fenns Whitman House. <sup>9</sup> His choice for architect was the stylish and prominent William Leslie Welton of Birmingham who was making a fast reputation for himself amongst the monied crowd of Birmingham. <sup>10</sup> Welton came to Birmingham well pedigreed in architectural circles. Trained at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, Welton joined the famous New York architectural firm of McKim, Meade, and White in 1902 and remained until 1907. <sup>11</sup> By then, the Modern movement of domestic architecture (1900 - 40) had spawned the Arts and Crafts movement as its first phase which lasted from 1905 - 30. <sup>12</sup> Out of this professional environment, William L. Welton would evolve as one of the State of Alabama's most prolific articulators of the new Craftsman style.

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<sup>7</sup>Alexander, The History of Boaz, pp. 20 - 22, 36 - 47.

<sup>8</sup>Snellgrove, Boaz Builds By Biographies, p. 376.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 375; Whitman, Tate, Letter to Faye Markham, March 4, 1994; The Birmingham News, April 1924.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., Whitman, Tate, Letter to Faye Markham.

<sup>11</sup>Erdreich, Ellen Cooper, "Birmingham Craftsman: An Introduction," Birmingham Historical Society: Birmingham Publishing Company, December 1983, Volume 8, Number 1, p. 10.

<sup>12</sup>McAlester, Virginia and Lee, A Field Guide to American Houses, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992, p. 10.

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The Craftsman style of architecture began in southern California in about 1903 by the Greene brothers, Charles Sumner and Henry Mather Greene, and Bernard Maybeck who were contemporaries of Frank Lloyd Wright whose Prairie style brought him international fame in the early 1900s. The Greenes and Maybeck were developing a residential type, known as the "California bungalow," that would proliferate across the country during the first decades of the century. The style was popularized primarily by Gustav Stickley in his The Craftsman magazine which he started in 1901 (at least one source says the magazine began in 1903) and which lasted until 1916.<sup>13</sup> According to Stickley and his devotees, Craftsman architecture was conscientiously a more "honest" design because of its disdain for frills and unnecessary rooms and spaces, attention to simplicity and functionality, belief in quality "craftsmanship," and harmony with natural settings in opposition to the newly industrialized environment. Stickley believed that the Craftsman design was more democratic than earlier, more pretentious, architecture and, therefore, quintessentially American.<sup>14</sup>

Perhaps ironically, the City of Birmingham -- the industrialized "Magic City" of the New South - developed a particular penchant for the Craftsman style. At least as early as 1907, Craftsman architecture was the favorite of some of Birmingham's leading and most wealthy citizens. At that time, Robert Jemison, Jr.'s Forest Park home was designed by noted local architects, Miller and Martin. That same year, William Leslie Welton arrived in Birmingham and formed a partnership with William T. Warren which lasted until 1910. While there, Warren and Welton designed homes for Sloss and Co., and a number of public buildings in the newly laid out the planned industrial community of Corey, later Fairfield, including the town hall and public Plaza magnificent for its intricate brickwork and terra cotta detailing.<sup>15</sup> Warren and Welton's success, in fact, won them several articles in American Architecture.<sup>16</sup>

By the time Welton left his partnership in 1910, the Craftsman movement was well underway and its influence upon Welton's work was becoming evident. In Birmingham, one of the toasts of the design world was the marvelous Craftsman - styled Frank Nelson House designed by S. Scott Joy and William Weston in 1910. That same year, William L. Welton designed the colorful and geometrically patterned Rhodes Park along Birmingham's prestigious Highland Avenue as well as one his most whimsical Craftsman houses, the Leonard T. Beecher House.

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<sup>13</sup>Gamble, Robert, The Alabama Catalog: A Guide to the Early Architecture of the State, University, Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, 1987, pp. 145 - 146.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 145; Erdreich, "Birmingham Craftsman: An Introduction," pp. 7 - 8.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 7 - 27.

<sup>16</sup>Birmingham Public Library Archives, Architects File, William Leslie Welton.

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English "thatched roof style," Welton achieved its effect by using a soft - edged, molded composition shingle roof with eyelid dormers. According to many, the design especially reflected the Craftsman emphasis on a bucolic, pre - industrial environment and disdain for the new industrial order.<sup>17</sup>

The next year, in 1911, Welton designed the G. J. Robertson House in Birmingham's affluent Mountain Terrace section of what would become Forest Park. The design was hailed by the Birmingham Ledger as the "first of its kind in Birmingham," with its "enormous piers of clinker brick and field stone laid haphazard to obtain a rustic effect." The design appeared highly reflective of Henry and Charles Greene's California Craftsman designs some of which had appeared in a 1907 edition of The Craftsman. The house so closely resembled the S. Hazard Halstead design in Pasadena, in fact, that talk of litigation was heard concerning Welton's "borrowing" of style. In his well - kept documentation of his work and inspirational sources, Welton included a number of the Greenes' designs. By now, a number of Birmingham architects, including Miller and Martin, Joy and Weston, and Welton were becoming well - known for their fine interpretations of the Craftsman architecture. In 1915, moreover, prominent local architect, Harry Wheelock, won acclaim for his design of the Benjamin Leader House.<sup>18</sup>

During the 1910s and 1920s, the Craftsman movement continued to define the look of Birmingham's working, middle, and upper class neighborhoods and homes and, although not the only local architect associated with the style, Welton was surely one of the influential and prolific. Welton's interpretation particularly of Craftsman architecture won him several articles in American Architecture during the early 1900s and 1910s, and in 1918 he received a national design award for his suburban house.<sup>19</sup> He was garnering a wide reputation for his Craftsman residences which showed the Craftsman signature wide porches, asymmetrical forms, exposed wood detailing, variety of materials and textures, and prominent rectilinear fireplaces and cozy sitting nooks, simple stairs, open floorplan, and built-in wood cabinets and bookcases; and for his public monuments for their use particularly of colorful glazed tiles in geometric patterns which often bespoke medieval armored knights, dragons, heraldic lions, and fortified castles.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Erdreich, "Birmingham Craftsman: An Introduction," pp. 9 - 19; Gamble, The Alabama Catalog: A Guide to the Early Architecture of the State, p. 146.

<sup>18</sup>Erdreich, "Birmingham Craftsman: An Introduction," pp. 11 - 15.

<sup>19</sup>Birmingham Public Library Archives, Architects File, William Leslie Welton.

<sup>20</sup> Erdreich, "Birmingham Craftsman: An Introduction," p. 15.

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William L. Welton was, in fact, one of the most well known and prodigious of Birmingham's early architects. From 1910 - 24, he handled over \$10,000,000 of building construction in Birmingham including five hundred residences, ten apartment buildings, ten schools, eight warehouses, eight churches, three theatres, six hotels, six banks, and thirty stores and offices. Among some of his most prominent were the Empire Building and Chamber of Commerce, the Tutwiler Hotel, First Christian Church, and residences of prominent Birminghamians including Mortimer Jordan, Richard Massey, and many in the affluent Forest Park and Highland Avenue suburbs.<sup>21</sup> He also became well known for his design of working class bungalows in the developing new industrial suburb of Corey, later renamed Fairfield, and for middle and upper middle class residences in Tuscaloosa, Greensboro, Boaz, and elsewhere around the State.<sup>22</sup>

Welton's design of the Edward Fenns Whitman House in Boaz received a featured write-up in the Birmingham News, and was hailed as a sign that prominent Alabamians need not go "seeking a big {architect's} name in New York or Chicago;" now, one could go to Birmingham and hire W. L. Welton.<sup>23</sup> His design of the E. F. Whitman House in Boaz would render it one of the finest residences in Boaz and its best example of Craftsman architecture. Whitman's son, Tate Whitman, has recently noted that Welton hired a Mr. Burns of Birmingham as his general contractor, who then trained his own son in brick masonry by allowing him to design one of Whitman's two first floor brick fireplaces. Tate Whitman goes on to say that the plaster casts above these mantels were known as "Cabrini casts" and are replicas of Italian friezes.<sup>24</sup>

Whitman and his family lived in the house until 1939 when lingering effects of the Depression forced them to sell. After the house remained vacant for the next three years, Dr. Marston Hunt and his family bought the house. Dr. Hunt had moved to Boaz in 1936 and set up his medical practice. In 1942, he bought the empty Whitman House for \$5000 and remained there for the next fifty years.<sup>25</sup> While he was there his medical practice flourished; and in 1956, he was instrumental in establishing the Boaz - Albertville Hospital where he became its first vice

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<sup>21</sup>Birmingham Public Library Archives, Architects File, William Leslie Welton.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., White, Marjorie, The Birmingham District: An Industrial History and Guide: Birmingham Historical Society, 1981, p. 82; Gamble, The Alabama Catalog: A Guide to the Early Architecture of the State, p. 147.

<sup>23</sup>The Birmingham News, April 1924.

<sup>24</sup>Whitman, Tate, Letter to Faye Markham.

<sup>25</sup>Markham, Faye, Interview, February 17, 1996, by Pamela St. King; Wright, Boaz Builds By Biographies, p. 376.

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Name of Property: Whitman, Edward Fenns, House

County and State: Marshall Co. - Alabama

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president and a member of the medical staff.<sup>26</sup> In 1992, Faye Markham purchased the house and now operates it as the Boaz Bed and Breakfast. Though the house remains intact and in good condition, Mrs. Markham plans to completely renovate the house and to utilize federal tax incentives in that effort.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Wright, Boaz Builds By Biographies, p. 183; Boaz - Albertville Hospital, staff interview, 1996, by Pamela S. King.

<sup>27</sup>Markham, Faye, Interview, February 17, 1996, by Pamela S. King.

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Section   9   Page  12  Name of Property: Whitman, Edward Fenns, House  
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County and State: Marshall Co.-Alabama

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Verbal Boundary Description

The Edward Fenns Whitman House is located at 200 Thomas Avenue in Boaz, Marshall county, Alabama as represented as parcel 2503062002014010 on the tax map of the city of Boaz.

Boundary Justification

The nominated boundaries contain all of the extant historic property associated with the Edward Fenns Whitman House.

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Name of Property: Whitman, Edward Fenns, House  
County and State: Marshall - Alabama

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1. Whitman, Edward Fenns, House  
200 Thomas Avenue  
Boaz, Alabama 35957  
view of front facade facing southwest  
negatives - AHC
  
2. Whitman, Edward Fenns, House  
200 Thomas Avenue  
Boaz, Alabama 35957  
view of north side facade facing southwest  
negatives - AHC
  
3. Whitman, Edward Fenns, House  
200 Thomas Avenue  
Boaz, Alabama 35957  
view of rear facade facing northeast  
negatives - AHC
  
4. Whitman, Edward Fenns, House  
200 Thomas Avenue  
Boaz, Alabama 35957  
view of east side facade facing northeast  
negatives - AHC
  
5. Whitman, Edward Fenns, House  
200 Thomas Avenue  
Boaz, Alabama 35957  
view of east side facade facing northeast  
negatives - AHC
  
6. Whitman, Edward Fenns, House  
200 Thomas Avenue  
Boaz, Alabama 35957  
view of first floor main hall, stair facing southwest  
negatives - AHC

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Section   photos   Page  15  Name of Property: Whitman, Edward Fenns, House  
County and State: Marshall - Alabama

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7. Whitman, Edward Fenns, House  
200 Thomas Avenue  
Boaz, Alabama 35957  
view of dining room, fireplace facing southwest  
negatives - AHC
  
8. Whitman, Edward Fenns, House  
200 Thomas Avenue  
Boaz, Alabama 35957  
view of library facing northwest  
negatives - AHC
  
9. Whitman, Edward Fenns, House  
200 Thomas Avenue  
Boaz, Alabama 35957  
view of second floor stair landing, sewing room facing east  
negatives - AHC
  
10. Whitman, Edward Fenns, House  
200 Thomas Avenue  
Boaz, Alabama 35957  
view of bedroom, fireplace with mantel garland bas relief facing northwest  
negatives - AHC
  
11. Whitman - Hunt House  
200 Thomas Avenue  
Boaz, Alabama 35957  
view of master bedroom, typical fireplace, sconces facing northwest  
negatives - AHC
  
12. Whitman, Edward Fenns, House  
200 Thomas Avenue  
Boaz, Alabama 35957  
view of kitchen, Ilgair exhaust fan facing west  
negatives - AHC

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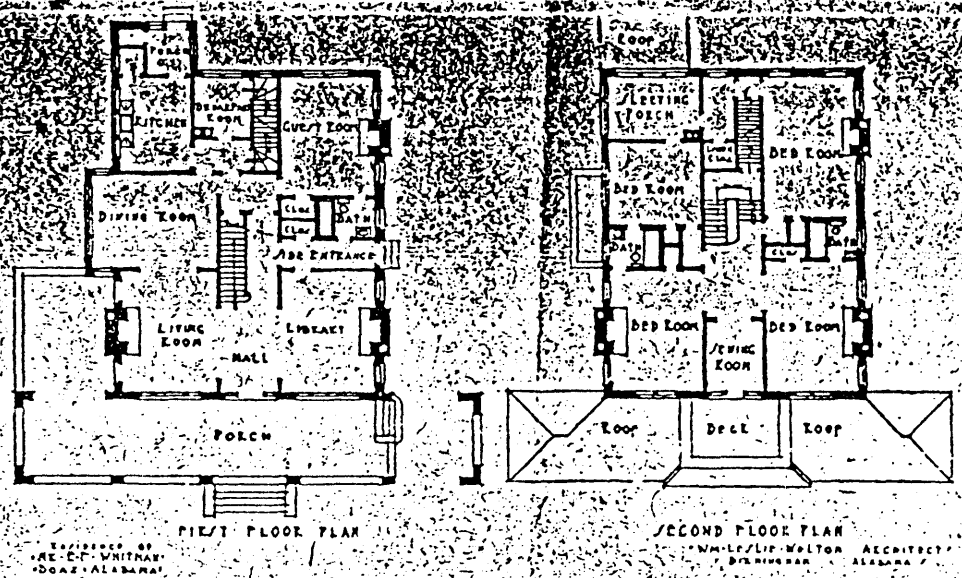
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- 13. Whitman - Hunt House  
200 Thomas Avenue  
Boaz, Alabama 35957  
view of attic facing southwest  
negatives - AHC
  
- 14. Whitman, Edward Fenns, House  
200 Thomas Avenue  
Boaz, Alabama 35957  
view of bathroom, herringbone tile facing southwest  
negatives - AHC
  
- 15. Whitman, Edward Fenns, House  
200 Thomas Avenue  
Boaz, Alabama 35957  
view of garage  
negatives - AHC
  
- 16. Whitman, Edward Fenns, House  
200 Thomas Avenue  
Boaz, Alabama 35957  
view of basement  
negatives - AHC

Edward Ferris  
Whitman House  
Boaz, Marshall Co.  
AL

# BUILDING AND HOME SERV

This is a series of articles illustrative of ideas about home building which have been embodied in houses designed and erected (especially in the Birmingham district). Effort is being made to keep the character of the architecture in line with the geological and other problems of the community. Ideas will be given by architects of the city and district who have given these problems much study, the material obtainable and other items which are considered in the erection of better homes and building construction. Cooperation by the Alabama Chapter, American Institute of Architects, has been assured and this department will present plans and drawings of architects of this city and district. Editor's Note.



Floor Plan  
←

WILLIAM LESLIE WELTON, ARCHITECT.  
ARCHITECT OF  
E. F. WHITMAN  
BOAZ, ALABAMA

One of the beautiful things about the State of Alabama, is that it offers almost any kind of building site one would desire. South Alabama offers the typical setting for the plantation type; Central Alabama the hill type, with a background of mountains; and the northern part of the state a mixture of both. Boaz is on a more or less level plain with distant backgrounds of undulating graceful hills. Such is the site of the house of E. F. Whitman, shown in today's News series and its architect is William Leslie Welton, of Birmingham. The discriminating people of Alabama are coming to Birmingham, more and more, each year for their architectural services. They find it is not necessary to go any farther to get the best trained service possible. The day of seeking a big name in New York or Chicago, has passed, except with a few individuals whose enthusiasm along those lines excels their judgment.