

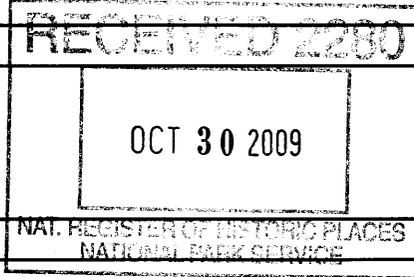
1057

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Ball Ground Historic District  
other names/site number N/A



## 2. Location

street & number Old Canton Road and Georgia SR 372.  
city, town Ball Ground ( ) vicinity of  
county Cherokee code GA 057  
state Georgia code GA zip code 30107

( ) not for publication

## 3. Classification

### Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

### Category of Property:

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

### Number of Resources within Property:

### Contributing

### Noncontributing

buildings	114	42
sites	4	2
structures	2	0
objects	0	0
total	120	44

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 1

Name of previous listing: Alfred W. Roberts House (listed September 11, 1985)

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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#### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination 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 meets the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

*Richard Crass*

Signature of certifying official

10.20.09

Date

Dr. David Crass  
Historic Preservation Division Acting Director  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

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#### 5. National Park Service Certification

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I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

( ) determined eligible for the National Register

( ) determined not eligible for the National Register

( ) removed from the National Register

( ) other, explain:

( ) see continuation sheet

*David L. ...*  
Keeper of the National Register

12/4/09  
Date

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## 6. Function or Use

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### Historic Functions:

DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling  
DOMESTIC: secondary structure  
COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store  
COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant  
SOCIAL: meeting hall  
GOVERNMENT: city hall  
GOVERNMENT: post office  
EDUCATION: school  
RELIGION: religious facility  
FUNERARY: cemetery  
RECREATION AND CULTURE: sports facility  
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: manufacturing facility  
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: industrial storage  
TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

### Current Functions:

DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling  
DOMESTIC: secondary structure  
COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store  
COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant  
COMMERCE/TRADE: warehouse  
SOCIAL: meeting hall  
EDUCATION: school  
RELIGION: religious facility  
FUNERARY: cemetery  
RECREATION AND CULTURE: sports facility  
RECREATION AND CULTURE: monument/marker  
LANDSCAPE: park  
TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

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## 7. Description

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### Architectural Classification:

LATE VICTORIAN: Queen Anne  
LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate  
LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival  
LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival  
LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Commercial Style  
LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Bungalow/Craftsman  
MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne  
OTHER: I-House

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

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OTHER: Folk Victorian  
OTHER: Double Pen  
OTHER: Saddlebag  
OTHER: Hall-Parlor  
OTHER: Central Hallway  
OTHER: Georgian Cottage  
OTHER: Queen Anne Cottage  
OTHER: New South Cottage  
OTHER: Pyramid Cottage  
OTHER: Gabled Wing Cottage  
OTHER: Side-gabled Cottage  
OTHER: American Small House  
OTHER: Ranch House

**Materials:**

**foundation** BRICK  
CONCRETE  
STONE: granite  
**walls** WOOD: weatherboard  
BRICK  
**roof** ASPHALT  
METAL  
**other** N/A

**Description of present and historic physical appearance:**

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The Ball Ground Historic District is a relatively intact railroad community located in northeastern Cherokee County in the foothills of the north Georgia mountains. It includes both commercial and residential areas that roughly follow the main east-west and north-south streets. The partial gridiron street pattern is not rigid due to the undulating terrain and the curvilinear path of the railroad. The railroad corridor parallels Old Canton Road in a generally north-south direction, separated by one large town block. Blocks are irregular. Most of the commercial buildings are located in a central three-block area along the east-west Gilmer Ferry Road, and date primarily from the 1900s to the 1930s. This area is characterized by one- and two-story brick buildings, some freestanding and some attached with party walls. Most abut the sidewalks. Marble and other stones are sometimes used as secondary materials or simple trim. Most commercial buildings once had flat roofs with parapets, but they have been topped with non-historic gable-front metal roof extensions. The original building form is usually still visible. Metal sheeting has also been placed on the upper facades of some stores, obscuring a few historic details. First-floor storefront areas generally remain intact, and maintain integrity. Residential areas fan outward from the central business district with no clear delineation. Houses do not follow a contiguous pattern of development, and one street could contain

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

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homes that fall within a span of 60 years. Most date from the 1880s to the 1950s in varied sizes and types, ranging from two-room workers' cottages to expansive hilltop landmarks. Few have a formal academic style. Residential lots range from one-quarter acre to one acre or larger in size, depending on whether they once supported agricultural plots. The Alfred W. Roberts House, listed in the National Register in 1985, is one of Ball Ground's largest houses, reflecting elements of several styles as it was expanded over time by the family. There are also a few large industrial and warehouse buildings related to the marble and monument industry, usually located near the railroad. Some undeveloped lots were used for monument storage. Community landmarks include an elementary school (c.1948 with later additions), a former downtown post office (c.1966), the Ball Ground Baptist Church and Cemetery (1916 with later alterations), the Old Methodist Church (1916), the former City Hall (c.1900), the Ball Ground Community Cemetery, Lion's Club Field, and the Roberts Building/Masonic Hall (1923).

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

### Landscape and Transportation Routes

Ball Ground is located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Ball Ground's natural terrain impacted development so that most buildings are in the valley created by elevations east and west of the town. The relative flatness of most of the downtown contributed to the linear (though somewhat irregular) pattern of development. The street layout developed in a mostly orderly fashion, extending outward from the central business district. The town did not develop alongside a major creek or stream, but little gullies can be found throughout the district. The large Etowah River lies between two and three miles away to the south. Heavily forested areas lie northeast and east of the district. Mature trees can be found in most of the district, primarily in informally arranged residential yards. There is one large wooded area located in a gully between Stripling and Terrell streets (photograph 53). No trees or designed plantings can be found in the commercial area along Gilmer Ferry Road.

The transportation routes within Ball Ground developed in tandem with the town. Major growth began in 1883 after the Marietta and North Georgia Railroad (later Louisville and Nashville Railroad, now CSX) arrived in 1882. The CSX's diagonal intersection with Gilmer Ferry Road (photograph 13) is in the central business district, which developed perpendicular to the rail line. (Ball Ground's train depot is no longer extant.) Georgia highways SR 5 and SR 372 were thoroughfares that historically ran right through the town. SR 5 served as a major state route to north Georgia. It followed the course of Old Canton Road in Ball Ground until the state relocated SR 5 a quarter of a mile west in 1947. (Newer development followed along this corridor, but almost all of it falls outside the district.) SR 372 comes from the north, along the current relocated SR 5, and then follows Gilmer Ferry Road east through Ball Ground, heading toward Roswell. Gilmer Ferry Road (SR 372), Old Canton Road, and Old Dawsonville Road served as Ball Ground's principal through roads. Much of the residential, commercial, and industrial development aligned with these major roads. However, the overall pattern of land subdivision was also defined by several short narrow streets. Lot or parcel sizes generally range from less than one-quarter acre to one full acre, but vary across the district. The larger residential lot sizes are associated with the common practice of maintaining agricultural plots for subsistence.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

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Central Business District

The downtown central business district (CBD) forms the core of the Ball Ground Historic District with the intersection of the CSX Railroad line with Gilmer Ferry Road as its approximate center. Gilmer Ferry Road, Ball Ground's "Main Street," runs roughly east-west through the commercial district. The central business district stretches just over a quarter of a mile along this street. The commercial core's small network of streets loosely conforms to a grid layout, with the city blocks spaced irregularly. Short, north-south streets intersect with Gilmer Ferry and divide the central business district roughly into three blocks. The streets that connect the commercial district to the residential areas include: Old Canton Road, Church Street, Mound Street, Valley Street, Old Dawsonville Road, and Northridge Road.

Commercial buildings all align to Gilmer Ferry Road. The CBD is not very dense, and approximately half of the buildings are detached. The remainder sit together in groups, typical of commercial buildings constructed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Most commercial buildings abut the sidewalks with uniform setbacks on long, narrow lots. The area is characterized by one- to two-story brick buildings, some with marble as a secondary material. The oldest extant building in the CBD is probably the 245-255 Gilmer Ferry Road building where the Coca-Cola Company began bottling beverages in 1903 (photograph 15, center). Roberts Store at 315 Gilmer Ferry Road has the earliest stone marker, dating it to 1911 (photograph 12, center). Most of the buildings were constructed between 1900 and the 1930s. Many of the commercial buildings have been rehabilitated with little loss to their historic integrity. Common non-historic materials include metal sheeting on the upper portion of facades and gable-front metal roof caps that appear to be removable (photographs 11 and 17). These cover and protect what were originally flat roofs with parapets.

Ball Ground owes its growth to the development of the marble industry that occurred in north Georgia in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. By the 1920s, Ball Ground had four marble finishing mills. Their finishing operations occurred within (or in close proximity to) the central business district—all south of Gilmer Ferry and alongside the L & N (now CSX) railroad line. Some of these businesses used the surrounding open lots as storage and transfer points for the finished marble. Ball Ground's other industries like the Coca-Cola bottling plant, Diversified Manufacturing, and Hasco Sewing Company also located within the central business district.

On the south side of the 200 block of Gilmer Ferry Road are several contributing commercial buildings. The building at 235 is a two-story brick retail store from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Five upper-floor windows have been bricked, and the windows and doors date from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The storefronts at 245-255 Gilmer Ferry were built together in the early 1900s (photograph 15, center). The second floor is covered in metal sheeting, but the first floor still reveals its brick façade with some marble sills and lintels. Its history includes use as a pharmacy (the 245 half), and Ball Ground's Coca-Cola Bottling Plant (in the 255 half from c.1903 to 1933). 265 Gilmer Ferry is downtown's only International Style building (photograph 15, left). Constructed c.1966, the one-story building was used as a post office until 2001. Its façade includes an inset glass-and-metal curtain wall, and a wall with varying sizes of marble blocks laid in patterns resembling Roman brick. The Hubbard Building

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

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on the southwest corner of Gilmer Ferry and Mound Street was constructed in the 1920s, and features a symmetrical front with two entry doors and large wood-frame display windows with three-part transoms of vertical lights. It also has a metal, pent roof with Craftsman-style triangular wood brackets underneath. The 1930s Lovelady Building on the southeast corner of Gilmer Ferry and Mound Street is very similar to the Hubbard Building, but has one front and one corner entry (photograph 17, left). Its history includes use as a department store, grocery store, and the Hasco Sewing Company, which manufactured diapers. Between this building and the railroad is a lot used for storage of marble pieces. Two noncontributing buildings with major alterations are also located on this block.

Contributing buildings on the north side of the 200 block of Gilmer Ferry Road include the 230 and 240 buildings – a 1949 Ford automobile dealership that operated until 1963, and the one-story brick auto garage to the east (photograph 16). The remainder of the block consists primarily of attached one-story brick storefronts (photograph 14). These include the 1947 Watkins Grocery Store at 250, the 260-270 building that was remodeled c.1960, and the 280 building (Dot's Restaurant) with a side wing added in 1979. One noncontributing building (#248, constructed in 2006) is located on this block. Between these buildings and the railroad is a small city park with a new gazebo, playground equipment, and benches. This noncontributing site historically had buildings on it.

The Roberts Building has an address of 290 Old Dawsonville Road, but faces Gilmer Ferry Road near the railroad (photograph 12, left). This community landmark is a two-story detached brick building constructed in 1923. It originally had a flat parapet roof, but is now covered with a metal gable. The lower façade is highly intact. It has a recessed entry with double doors, display windows with transoms, and a secondary entrance to the second floor, which was the Masonic Hall until the 1980s. Ball Ground's post office operated out of the main floor until the 1960s. The original owner and builder was Paul Roberts, who was a prominent Mason. Marble insets have the name "Roberts Building" on the lower level and "Masonic Hall" on the upper level.

The north side of the 300 block of Gilmer Ferry Road includes the Roberts Store at 315 (photograph 12, center). This detached one-story brick building was constructed in 1911 by A. W. Roberts as a general merchandise store. It operated as such until the late 1960s. The building includes a corbelled brick cornice, large display windows with transoms and wooden spandrels, and a recessed entry with double doors. A large one-story warehouse sits behind the store. To the east of the store is a small gable-front wood commercial building constructed c.1910 (photograph 12, right). It housed a barbershop for many years. Farther to the east is a mid-1940s garage once used by Diversified Manufacturing to make metal parts. At 340 Gilmer Ferry Road is a one-story wooden Craftsman-style building that appears to be a house, but was actually constructed in the 1920s as the office for the Consumer Monument Company (photograph 12, right). It has a granite foundation.

The south side of the 300 block of Gilmer Ferry Road includes the Lion's Club Ball Field at the corner of Gilmer Ferry and Northridge Road (photograph 7). This baseball field dates to the late 1920s, or possibly earlier, according to local residents, and is therefore considered a contributing site. This property includes an area with a stone monument commemorating an historic battle between the Cherokees and Creeks (photograph 8). To the west, at 365 Gilmer Ferry, is the former Consumers

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

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Monument Company Finishing Plant, dating to 1927(photograph 9). Consumers was one of several marble finishing works once located in Ball Ground. The exterior material of this steel-framed building includes concrete, glass, steel and sheet metal. The long gable-front building has large multi-pane windows. Other buildings on this block (photograph 11) include the adjacent Robertson Building (c.1959), the "Rock Shop" (1930s), and the former Citizens Bank/Malone Insurance Building (c.1940s). The small gable-front one-story building at 301 Gilmer Ferry was Ball Ground's city hall from the early 1900s until 2006. It has a symmetrical stucco façade with recessed panels for windows and doors. The southwest corner of Gilmer Ferry Road and Valley Street contains a small memorial space with a flagpole and local and state historical markers.

Schools, Churches, and Cemeteries

The Ball Ground Historic District includes a small collection of community landmarks that are outside the central business district, primarily on Old Canton Road.

Ball Ground Elementary School, located on Old Canton Road north of Gilmer Ferry, is the only school in the historic district (photograph 37). It consists of several interconnected sections, with the oldest portion dating to 1947-1948. This International Style classroom section (c.1947) was part of an addition to an earlier 1926-1927 building. The older portion of the school burned in 1968, and was replaced with a 1971 addition. The freestanding brick gymnasium in the rear dates to the 1947-1948 period (photograph 39, right). The main school building and its gymnasium retain enough overall integrity to be considered contributing resources.

To the east of the school is what is known locally as the Old Methodist Church (photograph 38). Located at Church Street and McHan Drive, it was built in 1916 on the site of an earlier building that suffered tornado damage. The gable-front brick building has a two-story tower with an arched entry and decorative buttresses. Other features include marble steps and sills, arched window openings, boxed eaves, and a brick water table. The congregation added a social hall and kitchen in 1966. The congregation moved to a new location on SR 5 in 2001, and Faith Baptist Church now uses the building.

Ball Ground Baptist Church is located on a hill on Old Canton Road across from the elementary school (photograph 21). The present building was constructed in 1916 after a destructive 1915 tornado caused damage to an earlier sanctuary on the same location. Six classrooms were added to the rear of the brick edifice in 1929. The church built a Sunday school annex in 1949, and a large educational building in 1958. At this time the earlier annex was moved to a plot adjacent to the Roberts Cemetery and used as a residence. Between 1960 and 1970, Ball Ground Baptist Church added a full height pedimented porch with Ionic columns and changed the side belfry to accommodate a steeple. To the rear of the property is a historic water tank, a contributing structure in the district.

In 1906, A. W. Roberts gave land to the Ball Ground Baptist Church for a cemetery along Old Canton Road (photographs 22 and 23). The cemetery is adjacent to the church, which was constituted in 1883. The Roberts family kept a large adjacent parcel to the north for their family cemetery

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

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(photographs 24 and 25). The earliest marked burial on either of these lots is the 1887 grave of L. E. Worley. Burials continue to the present. There are a significant number of historic gravesites and markers, making these two cemeteries contributing sites.

North of Ball Ground Elementary School on Old Canton Road is the Ball Ground Community Cemetery (photographs 26, 27, 28, and 29). The first burial appears to have occurred in 1865 with the death of Albert G. Kennedy (1804-1865). The cemetery is on donated land, and includes the gravesites of some of Ball Ground's early citizens. Prior to 1990, it had the name "Ball Ground City Cemetery" to distinguish it from the Ball Ground Baptist Cemetery across the street. The cemetery is arranged in a linear fashion and includes both family plots and individual gravesites. Markers date primarily to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as the cemetery continues to have burials. There is a small African-American section, possibly the only extant African-American resource in town, since blacks were coerced into leaving Ball Ground in the 1920s.

### Residential Resources

Ball Ground's residential sections radiate in all directions from the central business district, but the historic areas are mostly to the south and west. Residential areas of Ball Ground are generally not dense. A few homes sit on very large parcels of land with gardens in the rear. House lots are not always arranged in a regular fashion. Most of Ball Ground's extant historic housing stock dates from 1900 to 1940, with the greatest concentration occurring in the 1920s. The explosion in housing construction coincided with the period of industrial and commercial growth in Ball Ground. Few pre-1890 homes exist, having been demolished long ago. The progression of residential development in Ball Ground cannot be characterized by age of its housing stock as any one street could contain homes that date from 1890 to the 1950s. The few houses from the last 50 years are the result of infill on vacant lots. Several homes throughout the proposed district appear to be abandoned or for sale. A few vacant lots are also scattered throughout the district, some with evidence of old foundations.

Most houses in Ball Ground do not have a formal academic style, but several common types associated with small Georgia towns are represented. As documented in *Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings*, a house "type" refers to the overall form (the outline or "envelope") of the main or original part of the house and the general layout of the interior rooms. This includes the floor plan and the height. In contrast, a "style" relates primarily to the external ornament or decoration of a house and also to the aesthetic qualities of its overall form. Houses belonging to the same type may exhibit different styles, and the same architectural style may appear on different house types. Many houses in Georgia have little or no architectural style and are characterized only by their type. The district includes representative examples of house types and styles that were popular in Georgia in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. House types within the historic district include Double Pen, Saddlebag, Hall-Parlor, I-House, Central Hallway, Georgian Cottage, Gabled Wing Cottage, Queen Anne Cottage, Queen Anne House, New South Cottage, Pyramid Cottage, Bungalow, American Small House, and Ranch House. Styles represented include Folk Victorian, Italianate, Queen Anne, Neoclassical Revival, Colonial Revival, and Craftsman.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

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Since Ball Ground was not a “company town,” it did not have a distinct mill village, but there are areas where modest housing for workers is concentrated. These can be found along sections of Stripling Street, Groover Street, Valley Street, Old Canton Road, and A. W. Roberts Drive. There are several two-room house types that have been expanded in various ways. The examples in photograph 31 on Old Canton Road appear to be altered Saddlebag House types, where the central chimney has been removed and one of the two front doors has been removed or enclosed. Photograph 49, taken on Stripling Street, shows a Saddlebag House in the foreground with its two entry doors intact and a missing central chimney. In Georgia, many of these survive from the last major period of mill village construction between 1910 and 1930. Another house type often built for mill or factory workers was the Hall-Parlor, with two unequal rooms, and one door into the larger room. Double Pens typically have two square rooms. There are a few examples of each of these in Ball Ground.

The Georgian Cottage was one of the most popular and long-lived house types between 1850 and 1890 and also well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The plan of this type of cottage is rectangular with a central hallway with two rooms on either side. The roof can be gabled or hipped, with chimneys located on the exterior or interior between each pair of rooms. There are several good examples in Ball Ground, including the house in photograph 2, the one in the right background in photograph 70, and the houses at 360 Gilmer Ferry Road and 155 Depot Street.

The Central Hallway Cottage is one story, and features a symmetrical plan that is only one room deep. This house type was popular throughout Georgia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was sometimes expanded with rear and side additions. A Central Hallway type with a rear addition is found at 508 Old Canton Road.

The I-House is a two-story type that is one room deep and two rooms wide. Roofs can be hipped or gabled. I-Houses are usually wood-framed buildings with weatherboard siding. Most surviving examples are found in small towns in the Piedmont and rural Georgia. There are a couple in Ball Ground, including one in photograph 19 that has been altered with new materials and other changes.

Also prevalent during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century were the two-story Queen Anne House and the one-story Queen Anne Cottage. Both are comprised of a central-mass building with gabled projections on the front and side. Homes of the Queen Anne type are asymmetrical in arrangement, and no central hallway is present. They were most popular as middle-class housing in both urban and rural areas in the 1880s and 1890s. Roofs are generally hipped or pyramidal, and chimneys are generally placed within the roofline. An excellent example of a Queen Anne Cottage can be found at 311 Old Canton Road. The house at 265 Old Canton Road is an example of a two-story Queen Anne House.

The New South Cottage and the Queen Anne Cottage house types can sometimes be difficult to distinguish from the exterior. The New South Cottage was a popular middle- and upper-middle class residence between the 1890s and 1920s. It is similar to the Queen Anne Cottage in that it has at least one forward projection, but the main difference is its emphasis on symmetry and its central hallway plan flanked by a pair of rooms. The house at 490 Gilmer Ferry Road appears to be a New South Cottage, though slightly altered.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

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The most common house type in Ball Ground is the Bungalow. The Bungalow was popular in rural areas, towns, and cities in Georgia during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is divided into four subtypes based on roof form and orientation (front gable, side gable, hipped or cross gable). The forms are long and low with irregular floor plans. Bungalows often feature elements of the Craftsman style, including brackets, exposed rafter tails, and pier-based porch supports. Large front porches are a typical element in the South. There was a strong nationwide demand for small inexpensive houses, and Bungalows fit the bill nicely. The houses at 145 Valley Street and 410 Gilmer Ferry Road are good examples. Bungalows can also be seen in photographs 33, 62 (left), and 70 (left).

American Small Houses and early Ranch Houses are relatively rare in the Ball Ground Historic District. The American Small House is a small, plain, economical house invented in response to desperate economic times in the 1930s and 1940s. By the 1950s, Ranch Houses tended to predominate new home construction. Since there was no subdivision development in Ball Ground between the 1930s and 1950s, the houses from this period tend to be scattered. The house at 450 Gilmer Ferry Road is a good example of a contributing brick Ranch House with a linear form, hipped roof and recessed entry door. Several of the Ranch Houses in the district appear to date from around 1970 and are therefore outside the period of significance.

Ball Ground's leading families tended to build houses along major roads, such as Gilmer Ferry Road, the south part of Old Canton Road, and A. W. Roberts Drive. Mr. and Mrs. Alfred W. Roberts enlarged and remodeled their Plantation Plain farmhouse at 150 A.W. Roberts Drive around 1898 and again in 1918 (photographs 44 and 45). Alfred W. Roberts (1844-1918) was a prominent merchant, banker, and industrialist who acquired the property and house in 1887. The large two-story house has evolved since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to include eclectic architectural elements from the Victorian era and later classical elements. The home displays multiple gables with decorative feather-cut shingle patterns, bracketed cornices, brick chimneys, and a partial balustraded wrap-around porch with Doric columns. The grounds are landscaped with many locally mined marble features such as front steps, sidewalks, urns, benches, birdbaths, a pet cemetery, and a rock garden. The home was the first private residence in Cherokee County listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1985. At that time it sat on a 26-acre estate with an active farm. The property has been in continuous family ownership for more than 100 years. For this reason, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources recognized the farm with a Centennial Heritage Farm Award in 1993.

John F. Wheeler, the owner of a sawmill company, built the two-story home with Queen Anne-style elements at 510 Gilmer Ferry Road in 1906 (photograph 64). A two-tiered wrap-around porch with turned posts, balustrade, and jig-sawn brackets is the most striking feature of the home. The home has an unusual plan including a central hall with two rooms on one side and three on the other. A marble retaining wall separates the property from the road.

The Queen Anne style was Georgia's most popular late 19<sup>th</sup>-century style. It features complex roof and wall shapes, an asymmetrical façade, and a variety of textures, materials, and detailing. The one-story home with Queen Anne elements at 490 Gilmer Ferry Road has a hipped roof with multiple cross gables (photograph 68). The home, built around 1900-1910, has an irregular plan. The house has a front and wrap porch with turned posts and jig-sawn brackets. Alterations to the home occurred

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

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from 1920 through the 1950s resulting in some Craftsman details, the enclosure of part of the front porch, and the alteration and enclosure of the rear porches.

Folk Victorian houses were also built across Georgia from the 1870s to the 1910s. The houses usually feature simple forms with porches with spindle work detailing, jig-sawn trim, and gable decoration. Several houses in Ball Ground show elements of the Folk Victorian style. The home at 120 Blackwell Street has a Georgian floor plan and Folk Victorian elements (photograph 55). It displays a three-bay symmetrical front façade and a center gable on the front and side facades with decorative wood shingles. In addition, it contains a full front and wrap porch with turned posts, balustrade, and jig-sawn brackets.

The Neoclassical Revival style was popular in Georgia from the 1890s through the 1930s. The most common feature is a dominant full-height front portico with classical columns. The Dr. G.C. McClure House, later known as the Hubbard House, is a good example of a two-story Neoclassical Revival style home with a Georgian floor plan. While its address is 125 Roberts Lake Road, the house faces Gilmer Ferry Road (photograph 67, rear left). Constructed around 1900-1910, the full-width, one-story porch, set behind a full-height entry portico with octagonal columns, gives the home a formal appearance.

The Stripling-Lovelady house at 130 Summit Circle is among the largest and most elaborate Neoclassical Revival houses in the county. D.C. Stripling, manager of the Bank of Ball Ground, built the residence in 1912. The two-story home has a two-tiered wrap-around porch, with a circular corner, supported by full-height, giant Ionic columns. An independent lower porch, also supported by Ionic columns, is located behind the taller porch. The floor plan has a central hall with three rooms on each side. Additional features include a main entry with transom and sidelights, a two-story bay window, two interior ridge and two exterior eave brick chimneys, boxed cornice with modillions, and windows crowned with dentils. Local history sources claim that Stripling “broke the bank” by constructing the home because shortly after construction completed, the Bank of Ball Ground failed. He reputedly embezzled money from the bank to fund it. Stripling sold the home in 1920 to A.J. Lovelady. The home sits atop one of Ball Ground’s highest hills on a spacious lot. It is currently in deteriorated condition and has been nominated for the Cherokee County Historical Society’s “most endangered properties” list.

The most popular style in Georgia in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was the Craftsman style. Houses of this style were built across the state in rural, small town, and urban settings from the 1910s through the 1930s. Features of the Craftsman style include the use of a variety of materials, low-pitched roofs that can be gabled or hipped, wide eave overhangs, exposed rafter tails, and porches with short square columns on heavy masonry piers. Craftsman-style elements are often found on Bungalow house types. 211 Old Canton Road is a massed plan, side-gabled Craftsman Bungalow constructed during the 1930s (photograph 4, center background). The home has three-bay symmetrical front and a center, gabled dormer. Typical of the Craftsman style, the house displays a front porch with a shed roof supported by brick battered piers, exposed rafters, triangular knee braces, and three-over-one double-hung sash windows. 130 Blackwell Street is a 1920s one-story, side-gabled home of massed plan with an off-center gabled front porch with square wooden piers that rest on brick pedestals that

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

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extend to the ground. Additional features include a front shed dormer, exposed rafter ends and triangular knee braces. Photograph 62 (left) also has a good example of the Craftsman style.

The Colonial Revival style was popular in Georgia for a very long period from roughly the 1890s through the 1950s. Common features of the style include a symmetrical façade, entry portico supported by classical columns, and double-hung sash windows. 145 Old Canton Road is a good example of a home with these elements. It has a three-bay symmetrical front, an entry porch supported by grouped, slender columns and crowned with an iron balustrade, and a front entry with semi-circular fanlight and sidelights. The one-story cross-gabled brick residence at 295 Old Canton Road contains elements of both the Colonial Revival and Craftsman styles. The home was constructed between 1885 and 1910, but was completely remodeled in the 1920s. The Colonial Revival style comes from an accentuated front door with entablature supported by paired columns. Elements of the Craftsman style comes from the side porch with battered piers extending to the ground and several paired and ribbon windows. The home was pictured in the 1932 *The History of Cherokee County* as the L.B. Greene Home. 380 Old Canton Road is Ball Ground's only example of a Colonial Revival house with a gambrel roof (photograph 20, right). Known locally as the Hendrix House, this one-and-one-half-story home was constructed in the early 1900s and has a central hallway plan. The residence displays a three-bay symmetrical front, a large centered gabled dormer with additional smaller dormers on either side, two interior ridge chimneys, and a gabled front entry porch with square column supports.

Noncontributing Properties

The Ball Ground Historic District retains its overall integrity, with almost two-thirds of the properties considered contributing. Most of the noncontributing properties were constructed after the period of significance. These are primarily houses. They tend to be scattered among the contributing resources, and are not confined to any one area. There are a few historic houses that have been altered to the point of losing their architectural integrity. Examples include 120 Roberts Lake Road and 194 Mound Street, which both had brick veneer added over historic weatherboard siding. Another example of a noncontributing house is located at 351 Old Canton Road (photograph 19). While at first glance it may appear to be contributing, older photographs show that all exterior materials (windows, shutters, siding, doors, and porch) have recently been replaced with non-historic materials, and the front door has been moved. A new library on Old Canton Road is a noncontributing public building. However, there is very little new commercial construction within the district. (Ball Ground has a new U. S. Post Office on Chestnut Street and new recreational facilities and community buildings on Civic Drive, but these are outside the boundaries of the historic district.) Ball Ground has two small modern parks (one by the Old Methodist Church and one by the railroad at Gilmer Ferry Road) that are noncontributing sites.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

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**Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:**

nationally       statewide       locally

**Applicable National Register Criteria:**

A       B       C       D

**Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):**  N/A

A       B       C       D       E       F       G

**Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):**

ARCHITECTURE  
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
COMMERCE

**Period of Significance:**

1882-1959; 1966

**Significant Dates:**

1882 – Arrival of the Marietta and North Georgia Railroad.  
1883 – Ball Ground obtains a charter to incorporate from the state legislature.  
1898 – Roberts Marble Company begins business in Ball Ground.  
1906 – Ball Ground's first bank opens.  
1915 – Tornado destroys several buildings, including elementary school and two churches.  
1936 – Ball Ground's first public water system.  
1947-1948 – Ball Ground School adds new classrooms and a gymnasium.  
1966 – Ball Ground's new post office is its first (and only) International Style commercial building.

**Significant Person(s):**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation:**

N/A

**Architect(s)/Builder(s):**

N/A

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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**Statement of significance (areas of significance)**

**SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY**

Ball Ground owes its growth to the arrival of the Marietta and North Georgia (later L & N, now CSX) Railroad in 1882, and the development of the marble industry in north Georgia in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Mined in nearby Pickens County, much of the marble was finished or turned into monumental pieces in Cherokee County. During the peak of its growth in the 1920s, Ball Ground had four marble finishing mills near the railroad line. The district is significant at the local level in architecture for its representative collection of the types of commercial buildings commonly found in small Georgia towns, as well as its typical examples of residential types and styles popular between the 1880s and 1950s. The architecture is varied, and no one particular trend predominates in Ball Ground. House types represented include a few examples of many of those defined in *Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings*. Stylistic influences include Queen Anne, Folk Victorian, Colonial Revival, and Craftsman. The district is also significant in commerce because its central business district was a primary location for the buying and selling of goods and services for northeastern Cherokee County, as well as adjacent counties. Much of this commerce was also related to the marble finishing industry, which brought banks, general merchandise stores, professional offices, and other establishments to the community. The mail-order monument business was a major catalyst for growth. The district is significant in community planning and development because its plan reflects a typical crossroads town with a railroad. In this case, major development did not occur until after the railroad arrived, making possible the marble finishing industry. The primary orientation of the town is not toward the railroad, but the corridor did influence subsequent street patterns and many business locations.

**DETAILED SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT**

The Ball Ground Historic District is significant in the area of architecture for its intact collection of late-19<sup>th</sup>- to mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century residential, commercial, and community landmark buildings that represent prevailing design and construction traditions of towns in Georgia. Commercial buildings tend to have simple facades, but a few exhibit elements of Italianate or Craftsman styles. Significant styles of houses in the district include Queen Anne, Folk Victorian, Neoclassical Revival, Colonial Revival, and Craftsman. Most houses have no formal style elements, but are more readily identified by type. House types represented within the district include the I-House, Saddlebag, Hall-Parlor, Central Hallway, Georgian Cottage, Queen Anne Cottage, New South Cottage, Gabled Wing Cottage, Side-gable Cottage, Bungalow, American Small House, and Ranch House. These architectural styles and house types have been identified as important in the architecture of Georgia in *Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings*, a statewide context.

There is no organized mill village in Ball Ground, but the scattered workers' housing is significant because it reflects the history of Ball Ground as a major center for the marble finishing industry. Since there were several companies involved in this business, Ball Ground did not evolve as a "company town." However, much of the working class housing represents the vernacular forms found in many mill villages in Georgia. These include Saddlebag, Hall-Parlor, and Central Hallway

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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types, most with added rear extensions. The difference in Ball Ground is that workers and their employers tended to live in closer proximity. Ball Ground's relatively small size may have also contributed to this phenomenon.

Most of the houses for the middle class represent the prosperous period of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, which is why the Craftsman Bungalow was popular. In Ball Ground, these are usually modest one-story dwellings. Because very few post-World War II homes were built in the district, there are only a couple of examples of American Small Houses and Ranch Houses.

Ball Ground does not contain many two-story houses, yet those that exist are generally fairly large. These are significant because they reflect the prosperity of the company owners and the town leaders. The larger houses are more likely to have elements of academic architectural styles. Ball Ground's more elaborate homes at 150 A.W. Roberts Drive (mixed styles), 125 Roberts Lake Road (Neoclassical Revival), 510 Gilmer Ferry Road (Queen Anne elements), and 130 Summit Circle (Neoclassical Revival) are good examples. 150 A.W. Roberts Road has an asymmetrical plan, but 125 Roberts Lake Road and 130 Summit Circle exhibit Georgian floor plans. A few of Ball Ground's other large residences are one-and-one-half stories, such as 380 Old Canton Road (Colonial Revival).

The Ball Ground Historic District is also significant for its central business district with historic commercial buildings representative of the downtown architecture constructed in small towns in Georgia from the late 19<sup>th</sup> through the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in Georgia. This three-block area is located near the rail lines and along the main east-west route through town. It is characterized by one to two-story attached or detached brick commercial buildings. Most buildings have utilitarian storefronts with large windows and minimal ornamentation. The use of marble as a secondary material is a feature that has special significance in Ball Ground. A good example is the two-story brick Roberts Building at 290 Old Dawsonville Road, which was built in 1923. It includes two marble insets with the name "Roberts Building" on the lower level and "Masonic Hall" on the upper level. Another good example of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century commercial building is the Roberts Store located at 315 Gilmer Ferry Road. The former Consumers Monument Company finishing plant at 365 Gilmer Ferry Road is a surviving example of industrial architecture in the commercial area.

The district has several good examples of community landmark buildings. A good example of church architecture is the 1916 Ball Ground Methodist Church ("Old Methodist Church"). Its distinguishing feature comes from its front central tower, which was a common church plan type for small towns. Ball Ground's small front-gabled city hall at 301 Gilmer Ferry Road is a simple reminder of the importance of the community's historic beginnings. Ball Ground's 1966 post office is significant as the town's first (and only) International Style commercial building.

The Ball Ground Historic District is significant in the area of commerce because its central business district was once the center of commerce for northern Cherokee County as well as the neighboring counties to the north and east. The downtown was historically the primary location for the trading, buying and selling of goods, services, and commodities on a local and countywide basis. Residents in neighboring Forsyth and Dawson counties (which had no railroads), as well as residents who lived

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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in the northern part of Cherokee County, came to town to stock up on goods from Ball Ground merchants. Such commercial centers generally featured a range of retail stores (including general merchandise, dry goods, groceries, drugstores, millinerries, apparel/clothing, service/gas stations), professional offices (including banks, lawyers, doctors), automobile repair shops, entertainment, and other service establishments (restaurants, etc.), and communications-related businesses (including post office, telegraph office, telephone exchange, newspaper office/press). Ball Ground's downtown still sees a variety of commerce today with its shops, pharmacy, restaurants, and professional offices. The intact historic commercial buildings are representative of all types of commerce that contributed to the town's economy throughout its history.

Most of the commercial construction dates from the late 1890s until the late 1940s, with the largest concentration in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The arrival of the Marietta and North Georgia Railroad in 1882 provided the foundation for the growth of commerce. The line connected Ball Ground to four of the five incorporated towns in Cherokee County, but more importantly to Pickens County to the north. Ball Ground was intricately tied to the marble mining industry that began in the late 1890s in Pickens County. Much of the marble mined there was shipped to Ball Ground on the Louisville and Nashville Railroad line (formerly the Marietta and North Georgia, now CSX) or the private Amicalola railroad line for finishing. There were four marble finishing businesses in Ball Ground by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, including Roberts Monument Company and Consumers Monument Company. Marble finishing proved to be a catalyst for other business enterprises.

Alfred W. Roberts started the general merchandise Roberts Store around 1882. This store contributed to the growth and prestige of the community and provided crucial services to residents by supplying them with everything from fertilizer to feed to salted meats to clothing for close to 70 years. A.W. Roberts and his descendents went on to manage several business and industrial enterprises in the region, including Roberts Power Company, Roberts Monument Company, and A.R Roberts Real Estate and Brokerage Firm. Buildings associated with Roberts in the district include: Roberts Building, Roberts Store, 260-270 Gilmer Ferry Road, 265 Gilmer Ferry Road, and his house at 150 A.W. Roberts Drive (listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1985).

As owner of Roberts Store and Roberts Monument Company, Alfred W. Roberts had the means to financially back the establishment of a bank. Roberts, along with a group of investors, chartered the Bank of Ball Ground in 1906. The bank was an important addition to the thriving town, providing the necessary capital for commercial expansion. It was also important to the development of the region, being the closest bank for those in northern Cherokee County and further northwest in Pickens, Forsyth, and Dawson counties. The bank restarted or reorganized two additional times, each having a Roberts descendent on its board. The bank represented Ball Ground's role as the financial center of the region.

Ball Ground's position as a major regional trading center and its prominent role in the mail-order monument businesses meant that Ball Ground historically had a very large post office for a town its size. The local post office handled so much business that its operations had to move three times prior to the mid-1960s. Post office buildings included the 1923 Roberts building at 290 Old

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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Dawsonville Road and the 255 Gilmer Ferry Road building. By 1966 the mail-order business had declined and the postal service moved into the International Style building at 265 Gilmer Ferry Road.

The Hubbard family built the 1920s one-story detached brick building at the southwest corner of Gilmer Ferry Road and Mound Street. They ran a store out of the eastern half for over 50 years. The store supplied the latest fashions from Atlanta, saving residents the long trip there or to Canton during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Additional buildings that are good examples of commercial development in Ball Ground include: the Hendrix Pharmacy building at 245 Gilmer Ferry Road, the adjacent two-story brick building at 255 Gilmer Ferry Road, McKinney's Store building at 235 Gilmer Ferry Road, the two 1947 small grocery store buildings at 250 and 280 Gilmer Ferry Road, the 1949 Ford Building at 230 Gilmer Ferry Road, and the Jack Lovelady Building at the southeastern corner of Mound Street and Gilmer Ferry Road. Another example of commerce in Ball Ground was the Coca-Cola bottling operation, which took place in the two-story brick building at 255 Gilmer Ferry Road. Coca-Cola opened its Ball Ground plant in 1903, making it one of the company's earliest bottling plants.

The Ball Ground Historic District is also significant in the area of community planning and development for its intact town plan. The plan is a good example of one of the major types defined by Darlene Roth in her statewide context *Georgia Community Development and Morphology of Community Types* (1989). Ball Ground is a crossroads town with a railroad. The character-defining features of this type of plan include a railroad that postdates the founding of the community, so the primary orientation of the town is not toward the railroad. However, the railroad is an important part of the physical development and layout of the town. Frequently the railroad is slightly removed from the main center of town, or cuts across the previously developed grid or other street pattern. Examples in Georgia include Keysville, Riceboro, and Statesboro.

Prior to the arrival of the Marietta and North Georgia Railroad in 1882, Ball Ground was a crossroads settlement with a few buildings centered at the intersection of what are now Gilmer Ferry Road and Old Canton Road. The railroad initiated and shaped the growth of the town. The central business district developed perpendicular to the railroad tracks, and created a distinct downtown near the tracks and near the marble finishing businesses that developed around the railroad. The curvature of the railroad line, along with the curvature of Old Canton Road, created a street pattern grid that is not entirely uniform. This had a direct impact on the extant physical features of Ball Ground, such as the compact downtown and the irregular residential lots that surround the central business district. The community's historic growth and development can still be seen in its intact plan.

### **National Register Criteria**

The Ball Ground Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local level of significance in the areas of commerce and community planning and development for its intact historic resources associated with these themes.

The Ball Ground Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C at the local level of significance in the area of architecture for its intact collection of

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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residential and commercial buildings that represent common types of historic resources found in Georgia's towns.

**Criteria Considerations (if applicable)**

The period of significance includes the year 1966, which is less than 50 years before the completion of this nomination (Criteria Consideration G). This is the date of the construction of the former U.S. Post Office located at 265 Gilmer Ferry Road. The one-story building was used as a post office from 1966 until 2001. The post office was important because it was the center of community activity in the small town. It is exceptionally significant to Ball Ground because it represents the last community landmark building constructed. This building is also downtown's only International Style building. (A portion of the Ball Ground School is in the International Style, but it is on the periphery of town.) The post office building's façade includes an inset glass-and-metal curtain wall, and a wall with varying sizes of marble blocks laid in patterns resembling Roman brick. Its modern materials, asymmetry, and lack of references to past architectural styles make it stand out among the early-20<sup>th</sup>-century buildings surrounding it. After World War II, the International Style filtered into Georgia's rural communities through projects funded by local, state, and federal funds. These projects included schools, health centers, and post offices. Sometimes these buildings inspired the construction of other similar commercial and residential buildings or, like in Ball Ground, they remained downtown's only example of modern design. In the case of Ball Ground, the post office is also significant for its prominent use of local marble on the façade.

**Period of significance (justification)**

The period of significance begins in 1882 with the arrival of the Marietta and North Georgia Railroad in Ball Ground. Prior to this, Ball Ground was an agricultural settlement with a couple of crossroads stores and a few farms. The railroad enabled the industry and commerce associated with the marble finishing businesses that dominated Ball Ground for many decades. The original alignment of the railroad (now the CSX) is intact, and is directly associated with development of Ball Ground as a "crossroad town with a railroad," according to categories described by Darlene Roth in *Georgia Community Development and Morphology of Community Types* (1989). The period of significance ends in 1959 at the end of the historic period. By this time, most large industry was gone, population had declined, and virtually no new construction was taking place. A notable exception was the 1966 International Style post office, discussed above under "Criteria Considerations." For this reason, the year 1966 is also added as a significant date.

**Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)**

The contributing properties in the district date from the district's period of significance and retain their historic integrity. The noncontributing properties were either built outside the period of significance or are historic properties that have lost their integrity through alterations and/or additions, or through being moved from their historic location. Classifications are based on documentation provided by the consultant and through further evaluation by the Georgia Historic Preservation Division's National Register staff on a site visit in November 2007.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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Contributing resources include 114 buildings, mostly residential and commercial. There are also four contributing sites, including three cemeteries (Baptist Cemetery, Roberts Cemetery, and Ball Ground Community Cemetery) and the Lion's Club Field. The two contributing structures are the historic railroad line and the old city water tank behind the Baptist Church. There are 42 noncontributing buildings and two noncontributing sites (two small modern parks).

**Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)**

**Note:** *Jayne Bernhard wrote the following section in February 2007 as part of the "Historic District Information Form." It was edited by Georgia Historic Preservation Division staff.*

Pre-1838

The area that would become Ball Ground was located in the empire of the Cherokee Nation, which once stretched from the Piedmont area of Georgia all the way to the Ohio River and included the western fringes of West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.<sup>1</sup> By the 1830s, the Cherokee's territory had been reduced to northern Georgia.<sup>2</sup> The name "Ball Ground" reputedly derives from the Cherokee Indian ball-playing game that was played somewhere near the town site. Ball Ground was apparently not the site of Cherokee settlement, but a convenient meeting point to play the ball game. Local lore claims that the Cherokees in fact won a nearby large tract of land from a wager on a game of ball with the Creeks.<sup>3</sup> A notable event took place in 1755 between the Cherokees and the Creeks two and one-half miles from town near the confluence of the Etowah River and Long-Swamp Creek. There, the two tribes engaged in a large, fierce battle, known as the Battle of Taliwa. The Cherokee defeated the Creeks, forcing them to retreat south of the Chattahoochee River, which became their northernmost boundary. The state of Georgia later commemorated the event with a stone marker located in the center of town.

The Cherokee Nation began to lose territory with the encroachment of white settlement. The Cherokee underwent several negotiations for their lands with the United States in the 1810s, culminating in an 1819 treaty that left the entire northwestern part of the state to them. Ball Ground, as well as the entire Cherokee County, did not encounter white settlement until the 1820s, which even at that point was quite sparse. Relations, though, between the Cherokee, Georgia, and United States deteriorated with the discovery of gold in north Georgia in 1828.<sup>4</sup> The United States forced their final removal from north Georgia in 1838.

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<sup>1</sup> The *History of Cherokee County, The Heritage of Cherokee County, Glimpses of Cherokee County, Public Education in Cherokee County*, and oral histories were used to describe the background and history of the Ball Ground Historic District.

<sup>2</sup> Lloyd Marlin. *The History of Cherokee County*, (Atlanta: Walter Brown Publishing Co., 1932), 127.

<sup>3</sup> Marlin, 127.

<sup>4</sup> Marlin, 128.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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1832 – 1882

The north Georgia gold rush affected the development of Cherokee County. The state attempted to exert control over these lands by forming Cherokee County out of the exact boundaries of the Cherokee Nation's north Georgia territory. The state affirmed these boundaries by act of the legislature in December of 1831. Aided by an 1832 land survey, the original Cherokee County was divided into ten counties as follows: Cherokee, Cass, (now Bartow), Cobb, Floyd, Forsyth, Gilmer, Lumpkin, Murray, Paulding, and Union.<sup>5</sup> The 1832 land survey also resulted in the division of the original county into land districts to provide for the systematic distribution of land to white settlers. The land districts were then divided into smaller land lots that first opened to settlers in 1832 after two land lotteries. Ball Ground falls within both the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> land districts. The state of Georgia decided to name its 1032<sup>nd</sup> militia district "Ball Ground," lending support to this area's ancestral name during Cherokee County's formative years.

Ball Ground during the antebellum period through the early 1880s was merely a settlement community along the lines of Conn's Creek, Centerville, Mica, and Ophir to the east. As early county historian Lloyd Marlin wrote, "Its development up to (1882) consisted mainly of two country stores and half a dozen dwellings. The community was almost purely agricultural."<sup>6</sup>

Ball Ground's oldest home, the Alfred W. Roberts House, was constructed c.1860. It is a large, two-story farmhouse that has evolved from a Plantation Plain type to include elements of Victorian-era and classical styles. Alfred W. Roberts (1844-1918), a prominent industry leader and merchant, acquired the property in 1887. He enlarged and remodeled the house. Descendants of A.W. Roberts still own and occupy the property.

1880s-1920s

The arrival of the Marietta and North Georgia Railroad in 1882 marked a new beginning for the Ball Ground area. The railroad line started in Marietta, a prosperous post-Civil War town with close ties to Atlanta, and reached nearby Canton in 1879. With the completion of a bridge over the Etowah River in Canton, the railroad lined lumbered toward Ball Ground. Eventually the line stretched all the way to Knoxville, Tennessee, and a branch continued to Louisville, Kentucky. Along its path, the railroad line connected four of the five future incorporated towns in Cherokee County: Woodstock, Holly Springs, Canton, and Ball Ground.<sup>7</sup> Officials from the railroad decided to place a depot in the small settlement of Ball Ground and make a town there. Local landowners contributed a mile-wide circle of land to the railroad for a town site because they expected to benefit from an overall increase in value of their property within and adjacent to the town site. Town lots went for sale in April 1882. The town obtained a charter to incorporate from the state legislature in the fall of 1883. Citizens of Ball Ground

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<sup>5</sup> Cherokee County's boundaries changed again in 1853 with the creation of Pickens County to the north and, for the last time, in 1857 with the creation of Milton (later part of Fulton) County to the southeast, bringing its total size to 429 square miles.

<sup>6</sup> Marlin, 128.

<sup>7</sup> In 1905, the Louisville and Nashville Railroad Company acquired the Marietta and North Georgia, and the railroad line was named the L & N (now CSX). It ended up being the only railroad to come through the county, although the county historian noted in 1932 that people were still talking about the possibility of an east-west railroad through the county (Marlin, 141-42).

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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elected their first municipal officials in January of 1884. Captain Patterson H. Lyon (1836-1909) served as the town's first mayor. Born in Rutherford County, North Carolina, he came to Cherokee County when he was 11 years old. He fought in the Civil War and saw action in several battles including Chattanooga, Cumberland Gap, Vicksburg, and Kennesaw. The Confederacy promoted him to lieutenant in 1863 and captain the following year.

People began moving into town from the nearby rural settlements, like Conn's Creek and Ophir. By the spring of 1884, the town reputedly had a population of 250 residents as well as "a large number of new buildings, three church organizations, and a high school."<sup>8</sup> The 1890 U.S. Census listed 296 residents in the town.<sup>9</sup>

As the catalyst for development, the railroad made Ball Ground the commercial center of northeastern Cherokee County as well as southern Pickens County, Dawson County, and Forsyth County. One resident proudly proclaimed that Ball Ground was an "independent town."<sup>10</sup> Unlike Canton with its strong association to the Jones family enterprises (Canton Cotton Mills, Jones Mercantile, Canton Wholesale Company, Etowah Dairy, Hotel Canton, Main Street Garage) and Tate with its strong association with the Tate family's Georgia Marble Company, Ball Ground was not a company town. The town had a diverse collection of commerce and industry.

Ball Ground was best known for the marble industry. White, gray, and pink marble deposits were discovered in Pickens County and in the northern areas of Cherokee County in the late 1880s. Blocks of marble quarried at Tate, Marble Hill, and Nelson were sent to Ball Ground or Canton via the Louisville & Nashville Railroad (formerly the Marietta and North Georgia, now CSX) line for finishing. For marble to be "finished" meant that companies in Ball Ground cut the blocks of marble into smaller pieces, polished and carved them. Much of their finishing work involved creating marble monuments. Thus, the companies employed many skilled craftsmen to design and carve the stones. The companies shipped the final product to places all over the United States, using the L & N (now CSX) Railroad. Ball Ground reputedly had a very large post office for a town its size, with an extremely profitable mail-order business.<sup>11</sup>

According to a list compiled from the Cherokee County Record of Charters, seven marble companies were granted charters for operations in Ball Ground from 1905 through 1967.<sup>12</sup> The earliest marble operation in Ball Ground was the Roberts Marble Company. Alfred W. Roberts (1844-1918) started the company in 1898.<sup>13</sup> Roberts was a prominent merchant and industrialist who was involved in most phases of the town's early development as a banker, real estate developer, and cotton broker. A 1905 charter named him and his sons Judson B. Roberts, M. Clyde Roberts, and A. Paul Roberts as owners of the operation. It became the largest marble finishing plant in Ball Ground. The company's office and marble finishing building were located just south of Depot Street, between the

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<sup>8</sup> Marlin, 128.

<sup>9</sup> Marlin, 181

<sup>10</sup> Grady Holcomb interview.

<sup>11</sup> "Ball Ground's Name is from History"

<sup>12</sup> Mimi Jo Hill Butler, "Ball Ground Marble Companies as Recorded in the Cherokee County Record of Charters Book 1," 2006.

<sup>13</sup> Judson Roberts interview.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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rail line and Valley Street. They also maintained a showroom on Ponce de Leon Avenue in Atlanta. The company continued to operate until the 1970s, continuously family owned and operated.<sup>14</sup>

The Amicalola Marble Company appears to be another early company with ties to Ball Ground. The company constructed its own narrow-gauge rail line from the Marble Hill quarries in Pickens County to Ball Ground in the late 1880s (non-extant). The line followed Four Mile Creek (or Long Swamp Valley), crossed Gilmer Ferry Road just west of the Fred Boling home, and terminated at its finishing plant, which was located on the grounds of the former Consumers Monument Company finishing plant (non-extant). The line operated under Amicalola until 1916 to 1918 when Sam Tate, owner of the Georgia Marble Company, purchased the line and most of the company's buildings. Consumer's Marble Company of Ball Ground took over the company's building next to the ballpark.<sup>15</sup>

By the 1920s, the town had four sizeable marble finishing plants: Roberts Marble Company, Consumers Monument Company, Ball Ground Monument Company, and Southern Marble and Stone Company. According to former Ball Ground Mayor Fred L. Boling (1911-2003), the marble finishing industry employed over 500 people in Ball Ground at its height. Residents of Ball Ground also found employment at nearby Georgia Marble's Company's quarries and finishing plants in Nelson and Tate.

B.B. Scarbrough, W.J. Webb, O.A. Williams, C.C. Runyan, G.M. Clark, and H.G. Sandow filed a charter for the Southern Marble & Stone Company in 1910 and it was approved in 1916.<sup>16</sup> According to several sources, these men do not appear to have been from Ball Ground, let alone Cherokee County.<sup>17</sup> The Southern Marble and Stone Company's operations were located just one mile south of town. After the town's two competing Baptist churches reunited in 1928, the company purchased the Central Baptist Church, moved it to their finishing plant, and used it as their company office. At this point, the Roberts family acquired the company, thus some people in town refer to Southern Marble and Stone Company interchangeably as Little Roberts Marble Company. Located outside the Ball Ground Historic District, the church building and one finishing plant building still exist.

Three men from Minnesota, as well as William White from Georgia, obtained the charter for the Ball Ground Monument Company.<sup>18</sup> Ben F. Perry Jr. (1882-1933) ran the operation in town, serving as president and general manager. Perry also served as mayor and councilman of Ball Ground. In addition he was an active member of Ball Ground Methodist Church and was a Mason. The company appears to have switched to ownership by the Roberts family, under M.C. Roberts and C.W. Roberts, in 1934. The company's finishing plant (non-extant) was located along the railroad line just south of Roberts Marble Company's plant.

Carl W. Groover (1884-1976) and Clyde Brady started Consumers Monument Company around 1911. The company played an integral role in the town's economic development. The plant was

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<sup>14</sup> Judson Roberts interview.

<sup>15</sup> Charlotte Withrow, "City Developed in Early Days Around Marble Industry," *Cherokee Tribune*, October 3, 1980.

<sup>16</sup> Mimi Jo Hill Butler, "Ball Ground Marble Companies as Recorded in the Cherokee County Record of Charters Book 1," 2006.

<sup>17</sup> John L. Carver, *Annotated Obituaries from the Cherokee Advance, 1880-1838; Marriage Records of Cherokee County, 1841-1910; and Abstracts of Cherokee County, Georgia, Wills and Bonds, 1847-1921*

<sup>18</sup> Mimi Jo Hill Butler, "Ball Ground Marble Companies as Recorded in the Cherokee County Record of Charters Book 1," 2006.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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located on the south side of Gilmer Ferry Road, just south of the entrance to the current Civic Drive. Their first plant burned in 1927, but they soon rebuilt a second structure. This one-story manufacturing building still sits at 365 Gilmer Ferry Road. Their company office, also extant, sits across the street at 340 Gilmer Ferry Road. Groover served as president of the company for 60 years and worked at his office on Gilmer Ferry Road until his death at 92 years of age. The plant in Ball Ground closed in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, but Groover and Brady continued to work at the office until the 1970s, conducting work for Georgia Marble in Nelson and Tate.

Other industries that thrived during the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century included ginning, sawmilling, and woodworking. John Wheeler founded Wheeler Lumber Yard (non-extant), which was located in front of Marble Company just south of Depot Street, between the rail line and Valley Street. Several town residents invested in a cannery in the early 1900s. Unfortunately, the man promising to build it only erected the concrete foundation before fleeing town with everyone's money. The shell of a structure still sits just outside the proposed district at the western end of Lowery Street and facing the railroad. Ball Ground residents are particularly proud of their town being the site of a Coca-Cola bottling plant. The operation took place in the two-story brick building at 255 Gilmer Ferry Road. Trucks would drive through an entrance around the eastern window's current location to pick up bottles for distribution. One resident remembered drinking the leftover, half-filled bottles as a young boy.<sup>19</sup> The bottling plant operated in Ball Ground from 1903 to 1933.

The central business district stretched from the intersection of Gilmer Ferry and Old Canton roads through the intersection of Gilmer Ferry and Northridge roads—an alignment perpendicular to the railroad. Ball Ground's location on the railroad allowed it to develop as regional trading center. Population estimates from the 1930 census confirms that the town's commercial center would have served a sizable populace. Ball Ground's militia district alone consisted of 1,808 people, making it the second most populous district in the county after Canton.<sup>20</sup> Residents in neighboring Forsyth and Dawson counties, which had no railroads, as well as residents who lived in the northern part of Cherokee County came to town to stock up on goods from Ball Ground merchants.<sup>21</sup> As business was booming in the 1920s, a 1923 newspaper article excitedly reported that Ball Ground would be getting a new post office building that year. Postal services would move from the Lovelady Building to the first floor of the two-story brick building at the corner of Old Dawsonville and Gilmer Ferry roads.

According to one Ball Ground resident, "the store" was A.W. Roberts and Sons Store (Roberts Store).<sup>22</sup> It was a general merchandise store, selling everything from fertilizer to feed to salted meats to clothing. Alfred W. Roberts began this business around 1882 and it continued to be a family business for nearly 70 years. He built the one-story painted-brick store in 1911. The store and its warehouse still sit at 315 Gilmer Ferry Road. The early-20<sup>th</sup>-century one-room wood building just east of Roberts Store provided an important service to Ball Ground residents: haircuts. Bud Holcomb ran a barbershop here for a long time. Residents claim that you could always tell a Bud Holcomb haircut

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<sup>19</sup> Grady Holcomb interview.

<sup>20</sup> U.S. Census figures, Cherokee County, found in Marlin, 181.

<sup>21</sup> "Ball Ground," *Glimpses of Cherokee County*.

<sup>22</sup> Grady Holcomb interview.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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from its signature bowl-shaped look.<sup>23</sup> This, of course, occurred during the era when haircuts only cost 10 cents.

The two-story brick buildings at 235, 245, and 255 Gilmer Ferry Road are some of the town's oldest commercial buildings. They can faintly be seen in almost all historic photographs of Ball Ground. The Hardin family reportedly constructed the building at 255 Gilmer Ferry Road. During its earliest years, the building served as a hardware store and as the site of McKinney's dry-goods store. Dr. D.G. Hendrix (1855-1935) built the attached, two-story brick buildings at 245 and 255 Gilmer Ferry prior to 1903. Dr. Hendrix was one of Ball Ground's four doctors during the early 1900s. He used the 245 building, complete with a soda fountain, as his pharmacy. He also owned the next building at 255 Gilmer Ferry Road, which was the Coca-Cola bottling plant. Across the street from these three buildings, was the two-story brick Ford Building (non-extant). As its namesake suggests, the main floor of the building showcased Ford cars.<sup>24</sup>

The Hubbard family built the 1920s one-story detached brick building at the southwest corner of Gilmer Ferry Road and Mound Street. This two-tenant building, known as the Hubbard Building, has large display windows. The Hubbard family ran a store out of the eastern half for over 50 years, first as a dry-goods store and later as a clothing store. Next door, at the southwest corner of Gilmer Ferry Road and Mound Street, sat Jack (A.J.) Lovelady's big department store where one could find just about everything. Lovelady's first building along with the adjacent hotel burned in 1929. It was rebuilt soon after. Cliff Holcomb later ran a grocery store there for a long time. Across Gilmer Ferry Road, was a 5 & 10 store in a small wood-framed building (non-extant). Known as "Miss Mary's," the store sold "notions, candy and comic books."<sup>25</sup>

Ball Ground received its first bank in 1906. The Bank of Ball Ground built a small building next to city hall along Gilmer Ferry Road. Banking operations continued at this location, despite change of possession, until 1972. The Bank of Ball Ground went bankrupt in 1916 because its manager, D.C. Stripling supposedly embezzled money to construct his high-style Neoclassical Revival home located on the highest hill in town. Many local history sources refer to this residence as the house that "broke the bank." The bank went under new management, which renamed it "Ball Ground Bank." This bank closed again in the late 1920s during the nationwide wave of bank closings. It reorganized and reopened as Citizens Bank with Dr. M.G. Hendrix as president. Founders of Citizens Bank included: H.H. Hardin, A.P. Roberts, Judson Wheeler, C.W. Groover, and L.R. Thomason. Citizens Bank remained stable through the Great Depression, for which Ball Ground was fortunate.

As a successful mercantile center, Ball Ground once had two hotels. Both sat along the railroad line, but on opposite sides of Gilmer Ferry Road. The first hotel, run by Jack Lovelady and the Cagles, burned in 1929. It was located on the south side of Gilmer Ferry Road, now a parking lot. The Thomason Villa sat on the north side of Gilmer Ferry Road. It came down in the 1960s. The site is now a park, owned by the City of Ball Ground.

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<sup>23</sup> Jennie Byers, Grady Holcomb, Glen Densmore Jr. interviews.

<sup>24</sup> "Ball Ground," *The Heritage of Cherokee County*.

<sup>25</sup> Harriet Allison, "Miss Mary's—Ball Ground," *Heritage of Cherokee County*.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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Industry and commerce were certainly thriving by the 1920s. Ball Ground's population jumped from 448 residents in 1910 to 809 residents in 1920, likely the result of the town's thriving marble industries. The town expanded its charter in 1911 to accommodate new growth. Other marks of modernity soon followed: telephone and electrical service. Ball Ground received telephone service in 1915 under the ownership of the Nelson-Ball Ground Telephone Company. Interestingly, Ball Ground had electricity before most places in Cherokee County. The Robert's family built a log dam in 1916 creating a 65-acre lake from Long Swamp Creek just east of town. They harnessed water from the dam to provide electric power for their marble-finishing mill. In 1923, Paul Roberts formed the Roberts Power Company and began selling power to the town.<sup>26</sup> Roberts sold the company to Georgia Power in 1928 for a great sum.<sup>27</sup> The dam was destroyed in the late 1930s.

Ball Ground organized a school soon after the town obtained its charter. The public education book shows a picture of a two-story wooden building, labeled as "Ball Ground Elementary School about 1895." It was located adjacent to the ball field near the present school. The 1915 tornado destroyed this building. A new, two-story brick school (also photographed in the public education Book) was built soon after at the same site. This building burned in 1924. The steps to the school building still remain at the site of the current school ball field. The town constructed a new school building at the site of this second school during 1926-1927 and later added new classrooms during 1947-1948. The old portion of this school burned in 1968, but was replaced with a 1971 addition.<sup>28</sup>

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Canton High School was the only accredited high school in Cherokee County. Ball Ground School only went as far as the ninth grade. Students from outside Canton who sought secondary education could attend Canton High School by paying tuition. During the time when the county still had dirt roads, some students rented rooms at one of Canton's boarding houses for the term. The L & N Railroad ran northbound and southbound trains two times daily, which helped students outside Canton attend high school.

Several avenues for social activity also existed in the town. Many of Ball Ground's prominent male residents were Masons. The Masonic lodge was located on the second floor of the 1923 Roberts' Building at the corner of Old Dawsonville and Gilmer Ferry roads. Current residents claim the Lion's Club ball field at the corner of Northridge and Gilmer Ferry roads dates to at least the late 1920s. It is likely that the field has been a place of leisure even earlier. Ball Ground even had a movie theater in the late 1920s and early 1930s, complete with a sloping floor, in the Hubbard Building. In 1928 the Quarles family built the "Waqu" swimming pool (non-extant), as well as a filling station and lunchroom, on the site along Old Canton Road just south of the town center.<sup>29</sup> In addition, Ball Ground reputedly had many "well-patronized saloons."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> "Power Company for Ball Ground," *Cherokee Advance*, August 23, 1923.

<sup>27</sup> Patrick Bates, "Hands of God at Work: The Life and Contributions of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Webb Roberts," research paper for *Local History Research*, Kennesaw State University, July 25, 2005.

<sup>28</sup> Catherine Malone, "Ball Ground," *Glimpses of Cherokee County*.

<sup>29</sup> "Waqu Swimming Pool," *Cherokee Advance*, July 20, 1928.

<sup>30</sup> Catherine J. Malone, "Ball Ground," *Glimpses of Cherokee County*; Constance Clardy, "Mr. Carl Roberts Tells of Ball Ground in the Early 1900s," *Cherokee Tribune*, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 1976.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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The church was an important source of community activity for many of the town's residents. The earliest available record of the Ball Ground Methodist Church is a revised list of members from 1870. M.J. Cavendar deeded an acre of land for the church in 1874. The first church was a log cabin situated at the church's present location.<sup>31</sup> The congregation erected a frame church in 1896. Wind badly damaged this building causing the present brick structure to be constructed in 1916. Ball Ground Baptist Church was constituted in 1883. The heirs of Jacob Carpenter deeded land for the construction of a church. The church prominently sat on a hill facing Old Canton Road. Alfred W. Roberts gave land to the Ball Ground Baptist Church for a cemetery in 1906. The Roberts family kept a large adjacent plot. The Baptist congregation also constructed a new church in 1916 because of wind damage from a 1915 tornado.

The Roberts family helped to found the Central Baptist Church in 1908 after a disagreement with what became the First Baptist Church. The people who attended First Baptist Church became known as the "Hill Baptists" while those who attended Central Baptist were known as the "Valley Baptists." Roberts deeded land for the Central Baptist Church in 1914. After its first wooden building burned, the congregation erected a brick structure on the site of 195 Valley Street. The two churches reunited in 1928 under the traditional name of "Ball Ground Baptist Church". The Southern Marble and Stone Company purchased the Central Baptist Church building, moved it to their finishing plant south of town, and used it as their company office. Located outside the proposed district, the former church building still exists. One year after reconciliation, the Ball Ground Baptist Church added six classrooms to the rear of the church.

Ball Ground's era of prosperity is visible through the residential construction that took place. Many of Ball Ground's homes date from the 1910s to the 1930s and can be found within the boundaries of the proposed district. These residences were mainly constructed with no academic style, but several homes along Old Canton Road display decorative architectural embellishments. The Craftsman style was popular and many homes display elements of it. Among the most predominant building types are Central Hallway, Hall-and-Parlor, and Georgian plan cottages. In addition, many residences have hipped or pyramidal roofs with center dormers. As discussed in the previous description (Section 7), town leaders also built fine homes during this era.

Ball Ground once contained a small African-American community on the northwest corner of town, just west of the proposed district. Black students attended the North Georgia Colored School (non-extant) at the corner of Highway 5 and Mineral Springs Road. There is also an African-American section in the lower part of the city cemetery of Ball Ground. Reportedly the home at 120 A.W. Roberts Drive served as a black dormitory at one time.<sup>32</sup> Unfortunately, some of the town's white residents engaged in terrorist activities in the early 1920s that drove the entire black community out of Ball Ground. After this tragic event, African Americans working as domestic servants for families in Ball Ground commuted from nearby Nelson or lived full-time with their employers.

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<sup>31</sup> Betty Jo Harris & Catherine Malone, *History of the Ball Ground Baptist Church, 1883-1983*, Ball Ground, privately printed, 1983.

<sup>32</sup> Judson Roberts interview.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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Great Depression Through World War II

By the arrival of the Great Depression, Ball Ground had become a thriving little town. Population peaked in 1920 with 809 residents. Ball Ground, in fact, was the second largest town in the county. It remained so until the 1960s. Like most areas in the country though, the Depression made its mark. Ball Ground decreased in population from 809 residents in 1920 to 706 in 1930. Since people were not commissioning as many expensive marble monuments, business for the marble companies suffered. Manufacturing jobs became hard to find. The Coca-Cola bottling plant closed its doors in 1933. Commercial businesses appear to have come and gone or moved around to various buildings in the town during this era. The Densmores, Holcombs, and Cagles are examples of families that ran businesses that changed buildings. The much larger town of Canton continued to see an increase in population, around 100 people, during this period. At the onset of the Depression, it is possible Ball Ground residents left the community for jobs in Canton, particularly the Canton Cotton Mills.

Ball Ground did benefit from one of the New Deal programs. The town received a public water system through a Works Progress Administration project in 1936. Town residents previously drew their water at the well (non-extant) located at the park site adjacent to 280 Gilmer Ferry Road. Overall, the Depression impacted daily life, but the outcome was not as deleterious as the situation in more urban areas. The area's reliance on agriculture in many ways sustained them.

Several Ball Ground citizens fought during World War II and the townspeople did their part to support the war effort. The second floor of the Roberts Building (Masonic Hall) was a center of patriotic activity; women of Ball Ground gathered and assembled war supplies there. On the main floor of this building, Bob Purcell ran a government-contracted sewing plant, manufacturing bedspreads.<sup>33</sup> Town residents also rationed gasoline consumption by coordinating combined trips to Canton on a bus provided by Ralph Allison.<sup>34</sup> The grocery stores also rationed supplies to customers.<sup>35</sup> In addition, Cecil Ingram, who began Ingram Wrecking Company in 1941, collected scrap metal for the war effort.<sup>36</sup>

1945 – Present

Ball Ground's population during the 20<sup>th</sup> century peaked in 1920 with 809 residents. Changes in the economy caused several families to leave the community during second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. By 1970 population had dropped to 617 and it only slowly increased during the next three decades. The decline of the central business district started during the Depression. Consistent with the trend started in the 1930s, commercial businesses appear to have come and gone or moved around to various buildings in the town. Even so, some businesses remained downtown and did well. The town had four grocery stores from the 1940s through the 1950s: Holcomb's, Watkin's, Roberts, and McKinney's. These grocery stores not only delivered their own products, but also those from other businesses downtown. For example, one customer recalled asking for a hamburger from Dale's Grill

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<sup>33</sup> Grady Holcomb, Dorothy Byrd, and Barbara Sue Young interviews.

<sup>34</sup> Harriet Allison, "Ball Ground in World War II." *Heritage of Cherokee County*.

<sup>35</sup> Barbara Sue Young interview.

<sup>36</sup> "Ball Ground," *The Heritage of Cherokee County*.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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with her grocery delivery.<sup>37</sup> Hi Byers' service station and garage business had been doing so well that he built a new building across the street. The relocation of Highway 5 in 1947 to its present location a quarter of a mile west of the central business district exacerbated the decline of the CBD though. Several downtown businesses moved to new buildings located along its new course. In addition, the Trailways bus that stopped outside Mrs. Cagle's Café made it easy for residents to shop outside the city.

In 1947 a fire broke out at the corner of Church Street and Gilmer Ferry Road, destroying the two-story brick Ford Building and the adjacent Wheeler dry-cleaning. Charles (Red) Ingram, who owned the Ford dealership on the main floor, was able to save the cars and office equipment from damage.<sup>38</sup> The fire did not cause any major changes to the streetscape. Ingram constructed another Ford dealership, as well as an auto garage, on the same site in 1949. The new Ford Building remained a Ford dealership until around 1963.<sup>39</sup>

Already somewhat weak, Ball Ground's marble industry greatly declined in the 1950s. Roberts Marble Company continued to operate through the 1960s until 1973, continuously family owned and operated.<sup>40</sup> A couple of other small manufacturing enterprises appeared in town between the 1940s through the late 1970s. After the Ford dealership closed in the mid-1960s, a sewing company that manufactured coats used the building for a while. Diversified Manufacturing Company, a manufacturer of small metal parts, moved into the Byers' auto garage building in the 1970s. Hasco Sewing Company made diapers in the Lovelady building from the 1940s through the 1970s. Harris lumberyard (outside the proposed district) began as a small sawmill operation in 1940 and grew into a very large, successful lumber company. Cecil Ingram, who began Ingram Wrecking Company in 1941, founded Ingram Trucking Company in 1948, and then he started Ingram Truck Body Company in 1965. This company (outside the proposed district) is still in operation. In addition, it was not uncommon for residents to commute to Marietta to work at Lockheed, the cotton mills in Canton, to General Motors in Doraville, or to Atlanta for employment during the post World War II era to the present.<sup>41</sup>

Citizens Bank went from being a small town bank to a regional bank over the course of 70 years. The bank moved in 1972 from its downtown location to the corner of A.W. Roberts Drive and Highway 5, just outside the proposed district. Regions Bank bought it out in 1996, but kept it as a main office for their northeastern Cherokee County clientele. As Ball Ground's only banking center, it still maintains an important presence in the community.

In terms of education, Ball Ground School made considerable gains under the leadership of principal William Hasty Sr. (1922-2003). Ball Ground School added new classrooms and a gymnasium during 1947-1948 and started a lunchroom program with funding received from the state. The 1926-1927 section of the school burned in 1968, but was replaced with a 1971 addition. The elementary school

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<sup>37</sup> Harriet Allison, "Ball Ground Grocery Stores in the 1940s-1950s," *Heritage of Cherokee County*.

<sup>38</sup> "\$50,000 Fire Destroys Two Ball Ground Firms," *Cherokee Advance*, April 25, 1947.

<sup>39</sup> Richard Haithcock interview.

<sup>40</sup> Judson Roberts interview.

<sup>41</sup> Catherine J. Malone, "Ball Ground," *Glimpses of Cherokee County*.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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now is a hodgepodge of interconnected additions. Canton City Schools began operating on a contractual basis with the Cherokee County school system in 1937, bringing in 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students, including those from Ball Ground, into Canton. The paving of the county roads in the 1930s had made it easier to attend school, and by the late 1930s a countywide bus system was started. High school students picked up the bus at the corner of Old Canton and Gilmer Ferry roads, which was the town bus stop for the high school bus, as well as the Trailways bus. Several residents fondly remember listening to the jukebox in Mrs. Cagle's café after the high school bus brought them back to Ball Ground.<sup>42</sup> Canton High School fully merged with the county system in 1956. High school classes during that year moved to Cherokee High School, which was located along Marietta Highway in Canton. This occurred under the leadership of William Hasty who at that point was Cherokee County school superintendent.

Both the Ball Ground Methodist and Baptist Churches constructed additions during this era. The Methodist church added its social hall and kitchen in 1966. The congregation moved to a new building in 2001 along Highway 5, but Faith Baptist Church now uses the building. The Baptist church built a Sunday school annex in 1949. A major addition occurred in 1958 with the completion of the educational building. At this point the annex was moved to a plot adjacent to the Roberts' cemetery and used as a residence. The Baptist church received a major facelift in 1969-1970. The church added a full-height pedimented porch with Ionic columns and changed the belfry to accommodate a steeple.

Ball Ground went through a renaissance of sorts in the 1970s. A local community association formed in 1971 and took efforts to preserve the town's historic past by adopting a turn-of-the-20<sup>th</sup>-century theme for the central business district. This resulted in the remodeling of several storefronts. In addition, several antiques shops opened in the downtown's historic stores such as Lickskillet's and Bramson's. Additional efforts were made to revitalize the town during the 1970s with such events like citywide cleanups and spring festivals.<sup>43</sup> These annual festivals have continued to the present. New community buildings were also completed during this era of revitalization. The city built its community center in 1977 along Civic Drive. Recreational facilities surrounding the building followed. The new community center provided a venue for activities that formerly took place at the Legion Hall, which was demolished in the mid-1960s. Ball Ground built its first fire department / emergency response facility along Civic Drive. A new Masonic Lodge, also along Civic Drive, followed in the early 1980s.

Several small commercial businesses found homes in the historic buildings of the central business district. Haithcock Supply and Well-Drilling moved into the 235 Gilmer Ferry Building in 1973 and still runs its business there. Easy Ride Golf Cars found a great use for the well-maintained Consumers Monument Building. The business started in the fall of 2005. Ball Ground Auto Repair uses the 1949 auto-garage built by Red Ingram. Dot's Restaurant, a Ball Ground institution, and the Mustard Seed, an upscale restaurant, use buildings constructed in 1947. The 245 Gilmer Ferry Building continues to be a pharmacy, now operated by the Ball Ground Pharmacy. In addition, several small professional businesses use the buildings at 215, 255, 270, 315, and 360 Gilmer Ferry Road.

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<sup>42</sup> Dorothy Byrd, Barbara Sue Young, and Rebecca Ray interviews.

<sup>43</sup> "Ball Ground Today a Thriving Town."

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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Oscar Robertson bought his first building in the central business district in the mid-1940s. He turned his original building, the old Byers Garage, into the “Rock Shop”. People would come from all over to view his rock collection there. He slowly began to buy property downtown as businesses increasingly began to close. By the 2000s, Robertson owned over half of the downtown buildings. Robertson, though, did not seek to place new businesses in his acquired stores. Instead, he filled the stores and vacant lots with rocks, marble pieces, jewelry, and statues. People would still come to Ball Ground to the downtown that was full of rocks; yet, they likely were surprised to learn that they could only peer at them through the windows. Only the “Rock Shop” was open to the general public. Even that became open by appointment only in the 1990s. Vehemently anti-growth, Robertson literally “stonewalled” development in Ball Ground while the more southern towns of Cherokee County (Woodstock, Holly Springs, and Canton) saw great growth.<sup>44</sup> He died in the fall of 2005. Some residents believe that the future of the central business district hinges on what becomes of his estate.

Some residential development took place within the district after World War II. Ball Ground has several scattered American Small Houses and Ranch Houses. Housing from the late 1960s through the 1980s appears to be almost non-existent. Some homes from the 1990s-2000s were built as infill along Old Canton Road and Groover Street. Several of Ball Grounds many 1920s-1930s homes sit abandoned, vacant, or for sale/rent. Most new residential construction from the 1970s onward has occurred outside the city limits. The town has only recently begun to expand its city limits past its former one-mile radius.

Construction on Interstate 575 from Marietta began in 1978. By 1985, the interstate reached Ball Ground. The city’s exit is located about one mile southwest of the downtown. Ball Ground Mayor Rick Roberts started his tenure in 1988, with a break in term between 1993 and 1996. The city adopted a new zoning map in 1989 that reflected actual land use. The city council, under the leadership of Mayor Roberts, has been actively promoting traditional neighborhood development. They have encouraged new residential development to be within walking distance to the downtown. They kept three new community buildings—library (1997), post office (2001), and city hall within the downtown. A streetscape project is also under development. Of great importance, the city just completed installing a sewer system. This occurred after 30 years of discussion. The *Cherokee Tribune* quoted Mayor O’Sheilds in 1972 saying that Ball Ground needed a sewer system in order to attract industry; a septic tank system just cannot handle the type of economic development a town needs to stay afloat in a changing economy.<sup>45</sup>

Although much of the new growth is occurring just outside of the city limits, it undoubtedly impacts the town center. The area directly outside of the proposed district has been greatly transformed. Once a rural area, residential developments have been overtaking farms at a rapid rate. As a result, the rural, historic character has begun to vanish. The loss of historic resources continues to occur

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<sup>44</sup> Jayne Bernhard, “Ball Ground: Small Town with a Big Situation,” research paper for *Planning History and Theory*, Department of Regional Planning, University of Massachusetts, December 20, 2005.

<sup>45</sup> “New Mayor Wants Sewerage System,” *Cherokee Tribune*, 1972 article.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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especially as the city, and more substantially the county, grows exponentially. While city officials remain intent on preserving the traditional features of their town, they hope the historic district designation will foster a broader awareness of the need to preserve Ball Ground's historic resources in the midst of rapid development.

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"New Mayor Wants Sewerage System." *Cherokee (GA) Tribune*, 1972.

"Power Company for Ball Ground," *Cherokee (GA) Advance*, August 23, 1923.

"Waqu Swimming Pool," *Cherokee (GA) Advance*, July 20, 1928.

**Directories:**

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**Electronic Sources:**

Cherokee County Tax Assessors database, 2006.

[http://www.cherokeega.com/ccweb/applications/mapping/mapimages\\_canton\\_index.cfm](http://www.cherokeega.com/ccweb/applications/mapping/mapimages_canton_index.cfm)  
(accessed January 2007).

Grovie (Chink) Barrett, Sue Young, & John Carver, "Ball Ground Community Cemetery Index", revised 1993, <http://www.rootsweb.com/~gacherok/cemetery/bgrdcem.htm>  
(accessed January 2007).

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Grovie (Chink) Barrett, Sue Young, & John Carver, "Ball Ground Baptist Cemetery Index", revised 1994,  
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(accessed January 2007).

**Maps:**

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**Interviews:**

Byrd, Dorothy. Interview by Jayne Bernhard. Ball Ground, Georgia. January 9, 2007.

Castleberry, Joannie Hasty. Interview by Jayne Bernhard. Ball Ground, Georgia. January 9, 2007.

Day, Marshall Sr. Interview by Jayne Bernhard. Ball Ground, Georgia. January 8, 2007.

Densmore, Glen Sr. Interview by Jayne Bernhard. Ball Ground, Georgia. January 8, 2007.

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Ray, Rebecca. Interview by Jayne Bernhard. Ball Ground, Georgia. January 8, 2007.

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Young, Barbara Sue. Interview by Jayne Bernhard. Ball Ground, Georgia. January 9, 2007.

**Unpublished Documents:**

Bates, Patrick. "Hands of God at Work: The Life and Contributions of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Webb Roberts." Research paper for Local History Research class, Kennesaw State University, July 25, 2005.

Bernhard, Jayne. "Ball Ground: Small Town with a Big Situation." Research paper for Planning History and Theory class, Department of Regional Planning, University of Massachusetts, December 20, 2005.

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Butler, Mimi Jo Hill. "Ball Ground Marble Companies as Recorded in the Cherokee County Record of Charters Book 1," 2006. On file at Cherokee County Historical Society, Canton, Georgia.

Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division. *Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings*. 1991.

Latham, Dan. Cherokee County Historic Resource Survey. 1988. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

Niles, Andrea. "Alfred W. Roberts House." *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, September 11, 1985. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS): ( ) N/A**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested**
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued**  
**date issued:**
- previously listed in the National Register** (Alfred W. Roberts House - listed 1985)
- 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**
- Federal agency**
- Local government**
- University**
- Other, Specify Repository:**

**Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** NAHRGIS ID# 11692 through 11747, and 81500.

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property**      Approximately 145 acres.

### UTM References

- |    |         |                |                  |
|----|---------|----------------|------------------|
| A) | Zone 16 | Easting 740141 | Northing 3803533 |
| B) | Zone 16 | Easting 741947 | Northing 3803827 |
| C) | Zone 16 | Easting 741967 | Northing 3802185 |
| D) | Zone 16 | Easting 740189 | Northing 3801276 |

### Verbal Boundary Description

The National Register boundary is indicated on the attached district map drawn with a heavy black line.

### Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the intact, historic, and contiguous resources associated with the development of the town of Ball Ground. Excluded areas within the city limits do not have sufficient concentrations of properties that would be contributing to a district.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**State Historic Preservation Office**

**name/title** Denise P. Messick, National Register Historian  
**organization** Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**mailing address** 34 Peachtree Street, Suite 1600  
**city or town** Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303-2316  
**telephone** (404) 656-2840 **date** October 2009  
**e-mail** Denise.Messick@dnr.state.ga.us

**Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable)** ( ) not applicable

**name/title** Jayne Bernhard  
**organization** N/A  
**mailing address** 64 Railroad Street  
**city or town** Amherst **state** Massachusetts **zip code** 01002  
**telephone** (414) 526-4817  
**e-mail** Jayne\_Bernhard@hotmail.com

- ( ) **property owner**  
(x) **consultant**  
( ) **regional development center preservation planner**  
( ) **other:**

**Property Owner or Contact Information**

**name (property owner or contact person)** Stefanie Joyner  
**organization (if applicable)** Cherokee County Historical Society  
**mailing address** P. O. Box 1287  
**city or town** Canton **state** Georgia **zip code** 30169  
**e-mail (optional)** sjoyner@rockbarn.org

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

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**Name of Property:** Ball Ground Historic District  
**City or Vicinity:** Ball Ground  
**County:** Cherokee  
**State:** Georgia  
**Photographer:** James R. Lockhart  
**Negative Filed:** Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**Date Photographed:** November 2007

**Description of Photograph(s):**

Number of photographs: 70

1. 127 Old Canton Road; photographer facing north.
2. 131 Old Canton Road; photographer facing west.
3. Old filling station between 131 and 145 Old Canton Road; photographer facing north.
4. 200 block of Old Canton Road; photographer facing southwest.
5. 265 Old Canton Road; photographer facing southwest.
6. 301 and 311 Old Canton Road; photographer facing northwest.
7. Lion's Club Field, 300 block of Gilmer Ferry Road; photographer facing west.
8. "Battle of Taliwa" monument, 300 block of Gilmer Ferry Road; photographer facing northwest.
9. 365 Gilmer Ferry Road; photographer facing southwest.
10. 300 block of Gilmer Ferry Road; photographer facing northwest.
11. 300 block of Gilmer Ferry Road; photographer facing west.
12. 300 block of Gilmer Ferry Road; photographer facing north/northwest.
13. Railroad at Gilmer Ferry Road; photographer facing north.
14. 200 block of Gilmer Ferry Road; photographer facing north/northwest.
15. 200 block of Gilmer Ferry Road; photographer facing west.
16. 230 and 240 Gilmer Ferry Road; photographer facing north.
17. Gilmer Ferry Road at Mound Street; photographer facing west/southwest.
18. Rear of 315 Gilmer Ferry Road; photographer facing northeast.
19. 351 Old Canton Road; photographer facing north.
20. Old Canton Road at Sterling Drive; photographer facing north/northeast.
21. Ball Ground Baptist Church, Old Canton Road; photographer facing north/northwest.
22. Baptist Cemetery, Old Canton Road; photographer facing north.
23. Baptist Cemetery, Old Canton Road; photographer facing southwest.
24. Roberts Cemetery, Old Canton Road; photographer facing northwest.
25. Roberts Cemetery (foreground) and Baptist Cemetery (background); photographer facing southwest.
26. Ball Ground Community Cemetery; photographer facing east.
27. Ball Ground Community Cemetery; photographer facing west/northwest.
28. Ball Ground Community Cemetery; photographer facing west/northwest.
29. Ball Ground Community Cemetery; photographer facing west.
30. 511 Old Canton Road; photographer facing north/northwest.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

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31. Mill housing on 500 block of Old Canton Road; photographer facing northwest.
32. 539 Old Canton Road; photographer facing southwest.
33. 995 Old Canton Road; photographer facing north.
34. Old Canton Road looking to north of Ball Ground Historic District; photographer facing north.
35. Old Canton Road on northern boundary of Ball Ground Historic District; photographer facing south/southwest.
36. 887 Old Canton Road; photographer facing northwest.
37. Ball Ground Elementary School, Old Canton Road; photographer facing east.
38. Old Methodist Church, Church Street; photographer facing north.
39. Gymnasium and rear campus of Ball Ground Elementary School; photographer facing northwest.
40. Groover Street at Old Dawsonville Road; photographer facing northwest.
41. 260 Groover Street; photographer facing northwest.
42. Groover Street at railroad; photographer facing west/northwest.
43. Groover Street at Church Street; photographer facing northwest.
44. 150 A. W. Roberts Road, entry to Alfred W. Roberts House; photographer facing northwest.
45. Alfred W. Roberts House; photographer facing northeast.
46. 100 block of A. W. Roberts Road; photographer facing west/northwest.
47. Southwest corner fence of 150 A. W. Roberts Road; photographer facing west/northwest.
48. Stripling Street; photographer facing north/northeast.
49. 165 Stripling Street; photographer facing west/southwest.
50. Lyon Avenue; photographer facing north/northwest.
51. Stripling Street at Tatum Circle; photographer facing southwest.
52. 327 Old Canton Road; photographer facing southwest.
53. Lot at Terrell Street and Kilby Street; photographer facing southwest.
54. 172 Terrell Street; photographer facing west/northwest.
55. 120 Blackwell Street; photographer facing northwest.
56. 120 Blackwell Street, taken from Kilby Street; photographer facing southwest.
57. Kilby Street; photographer facing north/northeast.
58. 100 block of Depot Street; photographer facing west.
59. 185 Valley Street; photographer facing north.
60. Roberts Monument Company property at railroad; photographer facing north.
61. Roberts Monument Company property at railroad near Depot Street; photographer facing northwest. (Note: photographs 60 and 61 are outside the district.)
62. Valley Street at Chestnut Street; photographer facing north/northeast.
63. 100 block of Mound Street; photographer facing north.
64. 510 Gilmer Ferry Road; photographer facing east.
65. 400 block of Gilmer Ferry Road; photographer facing northwest.
66. Roberts Lake Road at Gilmer Ferry; photographer facing north.
67. 125 Roberts Lake Road (in background); photographer facing west/northwest.
68. Gilmer Ferry Road at Roberts Lake Road; photographer facing north.
69. Northridge Road at Gilmer Ferry Road; photographer facing north.
70. Gilmer Ferry Road at Northridge Road; photographer facing northeast.

(HPD WORD form version 11-03-01)