

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received **JL 22 1986**

date entered **NOV 4 1986**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Multiple Resources of Greenville, Alabama

and/or common

2. Location

street & number see individual inventory sheets NA not for publication

city, town Greenville NA vicinity of congressional district 2

state Alabama code 01 county Butler code 013

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<u>NA</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Ownership

street & number

city, town _____ vicinity of _____ state _____

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Butler County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Greenville state Alabama

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Alabama Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1970-present federal state county local

depository for survey records Alabama Historical Commission

city, town Montgomery state Alabama

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

A. General Physical Description

Greenville is situated in the rolling hills of Butler County in the south-central part of Alabama along the Louisville and Nashville railroad line, which was in the late 19th and early 20th centuries the main transportation route between Montgomery and Mobile. The importance of the railroad route has subsequently been replaced by interstate highway 65 running north and south along the northwestern edge of the city and bypassing downtown Greenville.

Located in the heart of the cotton belt, Greenville has been the county seat since 1820 and has historically been the main agricultural trade and transportation center for the region. For a brief period in the early 20th century, it was also the site of a small textile mill.

Greenville is laid out on an irregular grid street pattern with the main arteries of travel running east and west, and the secondary thoroughfares running north and south. The railroad cuts diagonally across the city in a northeastern direction.

The main commercial street (Commerce St.) runs east and west directly through the center of town and is terminated at the extreme eastern end by the county courthouse. Commerce Street has not only commercial architecture but also a few older residences, the city hall, the railroad depot and a small city park.

The main residential neighborhoods are scattered to the north and south on either side of Commerce Street. The residential area on the south is locally called Methodist Hill and the residential area to the northeast is referred to as the Baptist Hill neighborhood. The city's most affluent housing is located on the north side of town where the houses, for the most part, are large older homes (c 1850-c 1890) built well back from the street on large, tree shaded lots. The middle class housing, built at the turn of century, is on the south side of town. Most of these houses are small cottages and bungalows built close to the street, closely spaced on relatively small lots.

There are two black neighborhoods in Greenville one of which is located in the Methodist Hill area and the other in Baptist Hill. The Methodist Hill black neighborhood is located on the southern edge of town and is considered the older, more affluent residential area centered around the A.M.E. Zion Church. The Baptist Hill neighborhood was established at the turn of the century around the First Baptist Church in northwest Greenville.

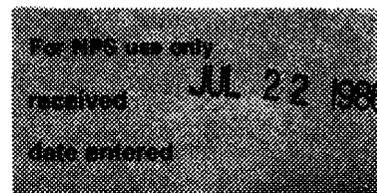
B. Architectural Description

The Greenville Multiple Resource Area includes commercial, residential, governmental and religious buildings that document the city's development from the mid 19th through the early 20th centuries. The scale and design of the architecture reflects the various period of economic affluence during the city's history.

The commercial buildings are relatively modest, generally constructed of brick and most are only one or two stories in height. Many date from the late

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1

19th century when the city experienced significant expansion c 1870 with the arrival of the railroad. Notable examples of this period are the vaguely Romanesque Style Capp's Drugstore (c 1890), Greenville Hardware (c 1890) with cast iron columns and the small vernacular storefront (c 1890) on the corner of E. Commerce and Park Streets. Other significant commercial buildings date from the early 20th century and include the Art Deco Ritz Theater (c 1925), the Neoclassical First National Bank of Greenville (c 1920) and the Spanish Revival railroad depot (c 1920).

The residential buildings reflect the architectural tastes of Greenville citizens from c 1845 into the early 20th century. Large mid 19th century Greek Revival houses like the Little-Stabler House (c 1850), the Newman Wright House (c 1845), and the Judge Lane House (c 1850) as well as Greek Revival cottages are found in abundance. Very fine Victorian houses of various sizes are also scattered throughout the city. The Queen Anne Style, for example, is well represented in numerous one story cottages. The Buell-Stallings-Stewart House (c 1890) is an outstanding example of one of Alabama's rare Carpenter Gothic Style residences. Early 20th century residences are also abundant particularly in the South Street District which is largely made up of 1920's Bungalows along with a few story-and-a-half Arts and Crafts houses.

The governmental and civic architecture all dates from the early 20th century. The very late eclectic Victorian Butler County Courthouse (1904) and the Classical Revival City Hall (1937) were both designed by two prominent Montgomery architects. The very simple utilitarian Parmer Elementary School (1935) and the Armory (1935) were both WPA projects.

The most outstanding church architecture includes the Spanish Revival St. Elizabeth's Catholic Church (1904), the Gothic St. Thomas Episcopal Church (c 1900) and the late Victorian Romanesque influenced First Presbyterian, AME Zion and First Methodist churches.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c. 1840-1936 **Builder/Architect** see individual inventory forms

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE OF HISTORIC RESOURCES AND THEMES

Criterion A - Politics/Government

The multiple resource area of Greenville is significant as having been the center of county government for Butler County since May, 1822 and city government since 1871. The town of Greenville, originally known as Buttsville, was named the Butler County seat following the recommendation of a local committee to the legislature in 1821 which stated that the town was better suited as county seat because of its central location and because it was the population center of the county. Four courthouses have served the county since 1822 and all have been located on the same site that was set aside for that purpose during the original survey of the town. The resource area also contains the Greenville City Hall which has served as the base for city government since its construction during 1936 and 1937 as a Works Progress Administration project which replaced the original 1871 Greenville City Hall.

Criterion A - Commerce/Transportation

The multiple resource area of Greenville is significant as both a local and regional trade center. Prior to the construction of the Montgomery and Mobile Railroad during the 1850's Greenville was primarily a local trade center with the commercial area located surrounding the courthouse. During this period the lack of an efficient, cost-effective transportation system hampered the development of the town. With the completion of the railroad through Greenville the area around the depot on Commerce Street grew rapidly into one of the town's two commercial areas. After the Civil War, beginning in the 1870's, Greenville became the most important point on the line between Montgomery and Mobile as the town provided the only shipping point for a six county region. The oldest evidence of black commerce in Greenville dates back to the 1880's with the construction of Ward's Neighborhood Store (#20). Located along the most prestigious street within the Methodist Hill black residential neighborhood, the store (c.1885) reflects a general pattern of locating black businesses in an area which afforded access to a large number of potential customers. The stabilization of this business establishment and its success during the early 20th century is indicative of the local racial patterns which created and shaped a separate social and economic environment for blacks. By the early 1890's Greenville's importance as a regional trade center was diminishing as other railroads began extending lines into the area that had depended on the town's rail service and agriculture was experiencing a period of depression. Greenville regained much of its lost importance as a local trade center

9. Major Bibliographical References

See attached sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 230 acres

Quadrangle name Greenville East & Greenville West

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

See individual inventory forms.

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

City limits of Greenville.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	NA	code	county	code
state	code	county	code	

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Shirley Qualls, Historian; Michael Bailey, Historian; and Tom Dolan, Architectural Historian

organization Alabama Historical Commission date January 1986

street & number 725 Monroe Street telephone 205 261-3184

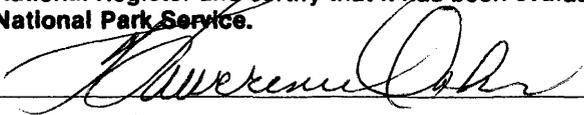
city or town Montgomery state Alabama

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

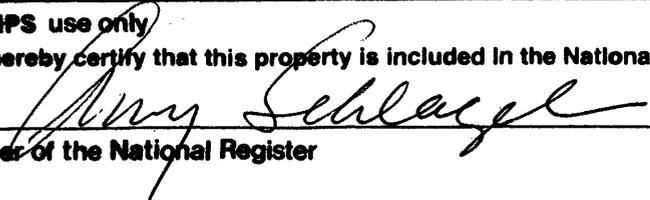
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title State Historic Preservation Officer date July 18, 1986

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

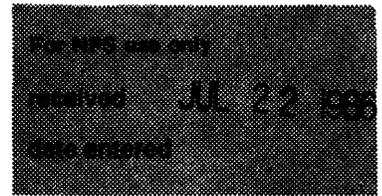

Keeper of the National Register date 11/4/86

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 1

following the turn of the century. This resurgence was based on the introduction of small industries, a large cotton mill and a general improvement in the areas economy and filled the role as Butler County's most important trade center.

Criterion A - Education

The Multiple Resources of Greenville are significant for associations with two buildings that are significant in the development of organized education in Greenville. The Thigpen School-Smith House (College St.-Fort Dale St. H.D. #11) is significant as the last known remaining building in Greenville associated with the early development of organized education in the town. Constructed in 1875 the building was erected by Dr. Job Thigpen to house the Greenville Male School which was started by Dr. Thigpen's brothers J. Mack and George Thigpen. The school was originally operated as a boys grade school but was expanded to include both high school and college courses. The Lomax-Hannon Junior College Theological Building (#19) on East Conecuh Street is the oldest black education building in Butler County. Constructed in 1911 by the A.M.E. Zion Church, the building reflects the development and growth of church supported schools for blacks in Alabama during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The building is the only remaining structure dating from this period on the campus of the state's only A.M.E. Zion Church post-secondary institution of learning. The area also contains the Parmer Elementary School (#2) which at the time of the complex's construction was the Butler County High School and the Greenville Grammer School. The school's physical plant was expanded during the late 1930's by the addition of new classrooms, an auditorium, cafeteria and manual training building all of which were constructed as Public Works Administration projects between 1936 and 1938.

Criterion A - Government

The Multiple Resource area of Greenville is significant for associations with the Works Progress Administration and the Public Works Administration Federal assistance projects of the mid and late 1930's. Several public buildings in Greenville were constructed during the late 1930's under the administration of these programs and include the Greenville National Guard Armory (Courthouse Commercial H.D. #14) a 1936 W.P.A. project; the Greenville City Hall, a 1937 W.P.A. building (Ind Prop. #17); and additions to the buildings on the campus of the W. O. Parmer Elementary School (Ind Prop. #2) constructed during 1936 thru 1938. These construction projects were undertaken within a short time of the completion of each in order to provide employment for certified workers who had been employed on newly completed Federally assisted projects in the area.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 2

Criterion B - Medicine

The multiple resources of Greenville are significant for associations with several 19th and 20th century physicians who served Greenville and the Butler County area:

Dr. Job Thigpen (Coll. St.-Fort Dale H.D. #10) practiced in Greenville for the late 1850's until his death in 1894. Thigpen was president of the Butler County Medical Society, was counsellor and later grand senior counsellor of the Medical Association of Alabama and Vice President of the Medical Association of Alabama.

Dr. P. V. Speirs (S. Gv. H.D. #83) who owned and operated one of the two hospitals located in Greenville during the 1920's.

Dr. J. L. Purdue (Ind. Prop. #16) who served for over twenty years as Butler County Health Officer during the first three decades of the 20th century.

Other physicians who practiced in Greenville during the late 19th and early 20th centuries and are associated with properties within the resources area include: Dr. William Hamilton (Coll. St.-Fort Dale H.D. #41); Dr. T. E. Greene (Coll. St.-Fort Dale H. D. #31); Dr. J. L. Bryan (S. Gv. H. D. #57); and Dr. H. G. Perry (E. Comm. Res. H. D. #3).

Criterion B - Industry

The multiple resources of Greenville are significant for associations with members of the community who were active in the development of small industries in Greenville:

W. R. and Porter Martin (E. Comm. Res. H.D. #2) owned and operated the Greenville Ice Factory, which was located on Commerce Street across from their house, between 1893 and 1920, as well as produced electrical power for a small section of Commerce Street.

C. C. Henderson (S. Gv. H.D. #27) who operated an ice factory, the Greenville Machine Company, a small foundry that manufactured parts and repaired agricultural machinery, the Henderson Grist Mill and the Light and Power Plant in Greenville during the early 20th century.

Henry Lobman (S. Gv. H. D. #17) who operated a furniture factory in Greenville during the 1850's and 1860's.

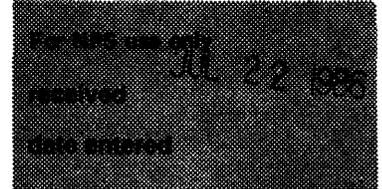
Criterion B - Commerce

The multiple resources of Greenville are significant for associations with several 19th and 20th century merchants who lived and worked in the resource area and contributed to the commercial development of the city.

James Hilliard Dunklin (S. Gv. H. D. #19) who operated a banking establishment, cotton warehouses and a mercantile business in Greenville, during the mid-19th century and was also elected president of the Alabama Board of Commerce.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 3

John Kelly Henry (E. Comm. St. H.D. #1) who operated a general mercantile establishment on East Commerce Street until his death in 1886.

A. Graham Stewart (C. H. Comm. H. D. # & Ind. Prop. #14) who was a prominent druggist and drug store operator on East Commerce Street near the Courthouse during the early 20th century.

Martin Teague (Coll. St.-Fort Dale H. D. #19) who moved to Greenville in 1866 and conducted a mercantile business in the town until 1883.

Other important 19th and 20th century merchants who are also associated with properties within the resources area include: W. J. Beeland (S. Gv. #27); R. A. Beeland (S. Gv. H. D. #19); R. A. Lee (S. Gv. H. D. #81); Charles Neuman (S. Gv. H. D. #19); J. M. Steiner (E. Comm. Res. H. D. #1); W. M. Wimberly (Coll. St.-Fort Dale H. D. #46); Frank McMullan (Ind. Prop. #11); F. E. Dey (Coll. St.-Fort Dale H. D. #46); H. Z. Wilkinson (E. Comm. Res. H.D. #3); J. R. Abrams (S. Gv. H. D. #18); James Law Dunklin (Coll. St.-Fort Dale #32); L. J. Beeland (S. Gv. H. D. #84); and Jefferson Beeland (S. Gv. H. D. #81).

Criterion B - Politics and Government

The Multiple resources of Greenville are significant for associations with several prominent attorneys and public servants, most of whom are of local significance:

Jesse Francis Stallings (Ind. Prop. #14) who was born April 4, 1856. Stallings was an attorney and represented Butler County in every state Democratic Convention from 1880 to 1901. He was elected solicitor for the 2nd Judicial Circuit for a six year term and was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention of 1888. In 1893 he was elected as a Democrat to a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. He served in Congress from March 4, 1893 thru March 3, 1901.

Dempsey Monroe Powell (S. Gv. H.D. #53) who was a Greenville attorney and was elected to two terms in the Alabama State Senate from Butler County in 1900 and 1903.

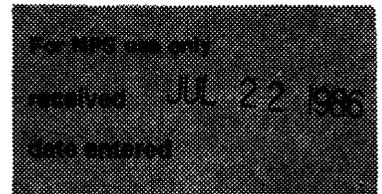
Arthur E. Gamble (College St.-Fort Dale St. H. D. #19) who was a member of the Greenville City Council, chairman of the county executive committee, a member of the 2nd District Executive Committee, and was elected Judge of the 2nd Judicial Circuit in 1910.

W. J. Nicholson (College St.-Fort Dale St. H.D. #21) was a member of the Alabama House of Representatives in 1911 and served as Butler County Tax Assessor for several terms during the early 20th century.

John Kelly Henry (E. Comm. St. Res. H. D. #1) was a Greenville attorney and was elected as Judge of the 2nd Judicial Circuit in 1859. He was re-elected to the judgeship in 1866 but was removed by an act of the U.S. Congress in 1868. In 1874 he was elected as judge of the Circuit Court and was elected to the State Senate in 1884.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 4

Also associated with properties within the resource area include: Robert Wright (Ind. Prop. #21) a member of the Alabama Legislature during 1855; James H. Dunklin (S. Gv. H. D. #19) who served in the Alabama State Senate in 1876; L. M. Lane (Ind. Prop. #13) who served as Butler County Probate Judge from 1886-1892; Zell Gaston (Ind. Prop. #16) who served as Probate Judge of Butler County from 1896-1903; James Law Dunklin (Coll. St.-Fort Dale #32) who served as Butler County Treasurer from 1874-1885.

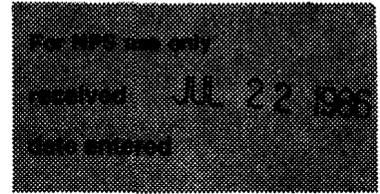
A number of Greenville's Mayors are also associated with properties within the resource area and include: Samuel Ott (Coll. St.-Fort Dale H. D. #21); Joel Flanagan Thames (Coll. St.-Fort Dale H. D. #31); Boughton Wilkinson (Coll. St.-Fort Dale #10) 1917-1919; Claude E. Hamilton (Coll. St.-Fort Dale #18) 1906-1910.

Criterion B - Transportation

The Multiple Resources of Greenville are significant for associations with two citizens of the town who were instrumental in the development of the railroad through Greenville: John Hilliard Dunklin (S. Gv. #19) who was a charter member of the Mobile and Montgomery Railroad when it was founded in the early 1850's and John T. Milner (S. Gv. #13) who was elected to the post of chief surveyor and engineer in 1858 and served in that position until his retirement from the railroad in 1872.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 5

Significant Historical Periods of Development

1818-1850

The first settlement of the site that was later to become the town of Greenville is believed to have begun during the early months of 1818. Several families from Georgia, while traveling the Federal Road camped approximately five miles south of Fort Dale (at a site), which according to legend, is the location of Greenville's present city hall. The Georgians settled at this site and founded a village which they named Buttsville in honor of Captain Samuel Butts, who had been killed at the Battle of Calebee in 1814.

The land on which the settlement was located had been purchased from the Federal Government in 1818. Some of this land was purchased by land speculators with the intention of sale to incoming settlers.

During 1819 the population of Buttsville tripled as settlers from the upper seaboard southern states were attracted to the area because of fertile land. In January 1819 a group of immigrants from the vicinity of Greenville, South Carolina arrived in Buttsville. Included in these South Carolinians was Eplecaim Parmer, who is purported to have built the first frame house in the town (in early histories of Greenville this house was believed to have been located on the site of the Scycamore stables) which was located on Conecuh Street a short distance N. E. of the courthouse and who also later donated the land for the site of the courthouse.

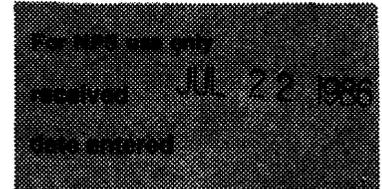
As more settlers entered the area, from other southern states, the population of the county by 1820 had grown to 835 whites and 570 blacks. During 1819 the settlers petitioned the territorial legislature in Huntsville to create a new county from lands that had been settled in sections of Monroe and Conecuh counties and on December 13, 1819 Butler County was created.

The village of Fort Dale was the first county seat but its tenure as county seat was short lived as a special committee, appointed by the state legislature at Cahaba in 1820 made the recommendation that, because of its central location and larger population, Buttsville should be named the new center of county government. On December 18, 1821, the Legislature authorized the Butler County Commission of Revenue to levy an extra tax on property, the income to be used to finance the construction of a courthouse and jail, to contract for the building's construction and to purchase 160 acres of land for the new county seat.

In May 1822 the site for the town and courthouse was laid off as well as four principal north-south, east-west streets extending from the courthouse site, by a large group of Butler County citizens. Also that same year the South Carolinians over rode the objections of the outnumbered Georgians and petitioned to have the name of the town officially changed to honor Greenville, S.C., their major point of origin. The frame courthouse, located on the site of present courthouse, was shortly afterwards completed and served in this capacity until destroyed by fire, along with the county records, in 1852.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 6

The first commercial building in Greenville, is believed to have been erected during 1822 by James Johnson. This log building was constructed for Caulfield and Bell, who opened the small mercantile establishment with goods transported in over a distance of 75 miles from Claiborne on the Alabama River. Other early merchants included Thomas McDaniel who purchased the Caulfield and Bell establishment and J. C. and W. H. Caldwell. W. H. Caldwell also worked as a jeweler and silversmith as well as constructing the first hotel in town. Caldwell's establishment was soon followed by the Bolling Hotel, a tavern and grog shop, erected by John Bolling a short distance south of the courthouse on Conecuh Street.

The courthouse was the center of activity for early Greenville and homes and businesses were built along the principal streets that led from it. The main streets during this period were Conecuh, which ran north and south away from the courthouse and was becoming the principal area for commercial activity. The first community church was constructed around 1820 in the western edge of the town burial ground which was located "at the foot of Commerce Street" and is now known as Pioneer Cemetery.

During these early years of development Greenville and the surrounding area received a small flow of immigrants from other Southern states but grew at a slow pace because of a lack of efficient transportation facilities. The town had been founded inland away from any navigable river and was severely handicapped in its development by this deficiency of an economical transportation system. Baled cotton had to be hauled overland by wagons to cotton landings on the Alabama River or directly to Mobile with mercantile goods being carried back to Greenville merchants on the return trip.

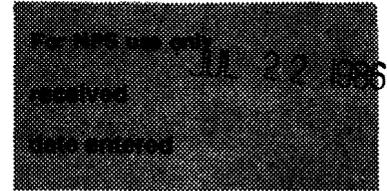
The adverse effect on Greenville's development caused by the lack of an efficient transportation system was apparently reflected in the appearance of the town. According to an 1891 reminiscence of Addison Posey, Greenville in 1847, was "a small and finished town . . . (it) looked like new plank and paint had gone out of use there." Two remaining residences that were most probably built during this period and reflect the town's development are the Lobman-Herbert House (South Greenville Historic District #17) and the Newman-Wright House (Individual Property #8) on Oliver Street. The Lobman-Herbert House, now located on Herbert Street originally fronted Commerce Street and was set back on a large lot.

1850-1870

The years between 1850 thru 1870 witnessed not only the first period of great development in Greenville, both in residential and commercial areas, but also an almost total halt in that development during the Civil War. According to the earliest known plat map of Greenville, drawn in August 1854, by county surveyor William Graydon, the town had begun to expand a short distance westward on Commerce Street. There were six north-south streets, Patsaliga, which was east of Conecuh Street, Chestnut, Hickory, Seminary (later Mallett), and Pine

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 7

Streets, west of Conecuh. There were three east-west streets: Commerce, Cedar which ran north of Commerce and Walnut which ran south.

By 1850 there were 11 merchants, 5 clerks, 5 doctors, 1 dentist, 2 shoemakers, 2 tailors, 1 blacksmith, 1 wheelwright, 1 stage driver, 1 lawyer and 1 law clerk located in the commercial area around the courthouse.

On April 12, 1852 the frame courthouse that had served the county for almost thirty years was destroyed by fire along with all county records. The destroyed courthouse was replaced shortly thereafter by another frame building which occupied the same site.

During 1855 two events took place which initiated a period of great development for the small town. That year Congress enacted the Eradication Act. This act opened Butler County to an influx of new immigrants by reducing the price of land for new settlers and allowed, in limited amounts, the purchase of land to increase established properties, both at fifty cents per acre.

The second event that had a profound effect on the growth of Greenville was the construction of the Montgomery and Mobile Railroad which made available, for the first time, a more economical transportation system to the citizens of the town.

John Buchner Little, an early historian of Butler County and resident of Greenville at the time of the railroad's construction stated in 1885, "the passage of this railroad gave new life to Greenville, and filled her streets with many persons in search of homes and occupations within the borders of the inland town. Carpenters and bricklayers were employed, houses sprang up like magic."

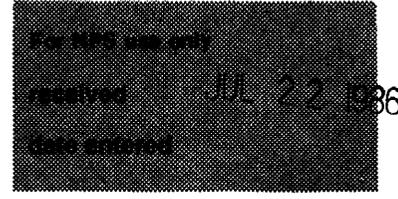
Upon the completion of the railroad and the construction of a frame passenger depot and freight house, a commercial district began to develop rapidly along Commerce Street and extended approximately a block towards the courthouse. The majority of these buildings were of frame construction. There were, however, some brick buildings in the commercial area as noted in the advertisement for the "New Brick store of D. G. Dunklin" which also served as offices for doctors and attorneys. In early 1861 B. W. Dendy advertised in the Greenville Messenger a "thorough knowledge of the art" of brickmasonry and the firm of Owen and Burns advertised both a good selection of bricks on hand at their yard but also that they would take contracts for the construction of buildings.

The development of the commercial area around the depot was indicated by the number of advertisements for business establishments near the facility. These included, "A desirable store near the railroad depot in Greenville. This store has an excellent business location fronting on Commerce Street leading to the Depot . . . R. H. Cook." The coming of the railroad also created a need for hotels and boarding houses which included three new establishments on Commerce Street, the Mallett's Hotel, the Greenville Hotel, and Mrs. E. J. Hudgins Boarding House.

During this period the commercial area suffered from the menace of fire. An April 3, 1861 article in the Greenville Messenger entitled "Town

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 8

Improvements" reported the rebuilding of part of the town's mercantile building after a severe fire.

"Our enterprising townsmen who were so unfortunate some time ago to get burnt out, we are glad to see are again rebuilding in tasteful and businesslike style. The very sad appearance which our streets have been looking from the effects of the fire, we hope to see in a few weeks looking like the days of yon. The buildings are a decided improvement on the old style, large and commodius, authorizing our merchants to do a heavy business."

Residential construction also grew at a relatively fast pace during the 1850's as compared to earlier years. Examples of this growth include the Otts-Nicholson House (College Street-Fort Dale Historic District #21) on College Street, the Dunklin-Beeland House (South Greenville Historic District #19) and the Bell-Abrams House (South Greenville Historic District #18) on Herbert Street, the Wright-Harrell-Johnson-Kilgore House (Individual Property #21) on Walnut Street, and the Henry-Plummer House (East Commerce Residential Historic District #1) on Commerce Street.

Some of the development during this period was located at the outskirts of the town limits. The James Law Dunklin House (College Street-Fort Dale Historic District #32), built in 1857 on land purchased from the Federal Government and the Little-Stabler House (Individual Property #1), both located on Fort Dale Street are examples of this.

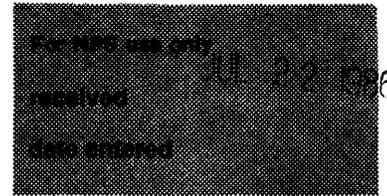
Greenville's boom was cut short almost as quickly as it had started by the beginning of the Civil War. Following the War, until the early 1870's there was little development in Greenville because of the area's depressed economy. There were notable exceptions such as the Joel Flanagan Thames House (College Street-Fort Dale Historic District #31) and the Teague-McCall-Taylor-Gamble House (College Street-Fort Dale Historic District #19). The Thames House, located on Fort Dale Street, was built shortly after the War by Joel Flanagan Thomas who had moved from Mobile to Greenville. The house was constructed using brick throughout that had come from Thames' own brickyard and was located on site that was originally part of a large lot owned by his father-in-law, James Law Dunklin. The Teague-Gamble House, was completed during 1865 for Martin Teague, who later became a successful Montgomery businessman.

1870-1900

During the 1870's Greenville's economy began to recover and undergo another period of rapid expansion as the Montgomery and Mobile Railroad again operated through the town. This line provided the only rail service, in this section of the state. Farmers from Pike, Crenshaw, Conecuh, Geneva, Wilcox and Covington counties brought cotton and other agricultural goods into Greenville, making the town a major shipping point for farm goods in the region. After the Louisville

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 9

and Nashville took over control of the line in 1881, the town became the most important shipping point between Montgomery and Mobile and received more freight and shipped more cotton, along with other agricultural goods than any other point on the route.

By the 1880's the "West End" commercial area located near the depot, extended eastward one full block from Bolling to Caldwell Streets with scattered commercial buildings and dwellings farther eastward on Commerce Street. Most of the commercial buildings were frame construction, with the exception of the buildings on the north side of Commerce Street between the railroad and Few Street that included the Perry House Hotel (demolished 1978), built in 1879.

During the 1870's and 1880's little change took place in the "East End" commercial area, the exception being the construction of a brick courthouse in 1872 to replace the inadequate frame building which had been erected following the destruction of the first courthouse in 1852 as well as the construction of a new city hall. Located on the southeast corner of Commerce and Church Street, the first floor of the building was used as a produce and meat market. City offices were located on the front section of the second floor with the remaining second floor area used as an Opera House. Around 1907 fire destroyed the interior and the large tower of the front. The destroyed portions were rebuilt under the supervision of City Engineer F. A. Koepecke as an auditorium which was later used as a motion picture theater. The building was heavily altered during the 1950's and no longer exhibits its original facade. The City Hotel, the old Mallett Hotel of 1861, was removed in 1892 to make room for a large three story brick hotel that was to cover two-thirds of the block. This hotel, started in 1893, was intended as a resort hotel for northern tourists but was never finished. The uncompleted building was demolished at the turn of the century to make way for the construction of St. Elizabeth's Roman Catholic Church.

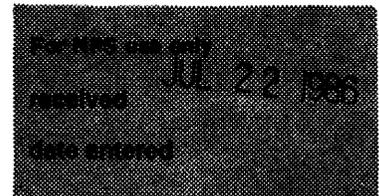
The residential area of Greenville began to expand on Fort Dale across the railroad tracks, around the Hamilton Street area and along College Street and southward away from the "East End" business district down Hickory Street and Pine Street with these developments continuing until after the turn of the century. John Buckner Little gave an overall description of the type development found throughout the town during the late 1880's.

"The private residences here are mostly neat, comfortable and substantial structures, of the cottage order of architecture and are especially adapted to this locality and climate. But few are found of the palatial order. All, however, impress the observer with the fact that they are constructed in accordance with the most approved patterns of workmanship and are built both for beauty of design and for great convenience of those who occupy them."

Examples of the residential development during this period include the Buell-Stallings-Stewart House (Individual Property #14) on Fort Dale Street, the Thigpen School-Smith House (College Street-Fort Dale Historic District #11) on

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 10

College Street which was originally constructed in 1875 as a boys school, the Hamilton-Wright House (College Street-Fort Dale Historic District #41) on Hamilton Street, the Lee-Beeland House (South Greenville Historic District #81) on Dunklin and South Pine Streets and the Ray House (Individual Property #10) on Milner Street. Other notable houses built during the period are the Gaston-Purdue House (Individual Property #16), built in 1895 for Judge Zell Gaston on Cedar Street and the Dr. H. G. Perry House (East Commerce Residential Historic District #3), also built in 1895. The house was constructed by contractor Sam Morris, on the same block as the Henry-Plumm House, (East Commercial Residential Historic District #1) and the Martin House (East Commerce Residential Historic District #2) on the site of the "Father" Jordan House which, although, at that time was considered a landmark of the town, was demolished to make room for the construction.

By the late 1880's and early 1890's the population of Greenville had grown to number around 3,000 and the town contained a variety of commercial establishments. Included in the business directory of the period were four builders and contractors, J. Kingsbury, Robert T. Lee, E. A. Morris and M. Wimberly.

By the late 1890's the "West End" commercial area had continued to expand eastward to Caldwell Street with intermitant commercial buildings and residences up to Church Street. A series of contiguous brick buildings were located on the corner of Church and Commerce Street on the north side, and contained the post offices as well as the Bank of Greenville.

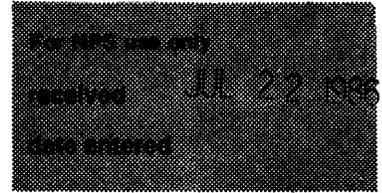
During the mid-1880's two of Greenville's churches, the First Methodist and the Presbyterian Church (Individual Property #18) on the corner of Commerce and Pine Streets were erected. During April 1896 the old frame St. Thomas Episcopal Church, on the corner of Church and Herbert Streets, was torn down to make room for a new building (South Greenville Historic District #23) which by July was almost completed. The construction of the new building was overseen by the Rector, G. R. Upton who "supervised the laying of every brick and no piece of timber has entered into the structure that did not pass his critical examinations."

Greenville's importance as an area trade center began to decline by the 1890's as railroads began extending into areas that up to that time had depended on the town's rail service for the transportation of agricultural crops, primarily cotton, as well as timber. Also during the early 1850's cotton prices fell to five cents per pound causing the town's agriculturally based economy to slip into a period of depression which forced the closing of many commercial establishments as well as the discontinuation of the town's street car service on Commerce Street.

The depressed economic condition of Greenville caused many influential members of the business community to press for other sources of revenue to bolster the sagging economy. The movement called for the introduction of as many small industries as possible as well as the construction of a cotton mill. Many small industries such as the Greenville Cotton Oil Mill, the Purity Fertilizer Factory, C. C. Henderson's Iron Foundary and the Gulf Red Cedar Mill

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 11

were started during this period. The original buildings of these industries have been lost over the years thru demolition. The movement for a cotton mill was not successful until the mid-1920's.

Towards the end of the 19th century Greenville was overcoming many of its economic ills as the Greenville Advocate reported in an article entitled "Progressive Greenville."

"Greenville is keeping in touch with the progressive fever which seems to have taken hold of the South and not withstanding that Greenville has gone through a great many reverses within the past few years she is now forging ahead as one of the most progressive and prosperous cities in the state."

1900-1920

Greenville entered the 20th century with a spirit of optimism. Many of the stores that had been vacant for long periods of time were again being occupied and the Greenville Advocate reported that before the opening of the business season of 1900 that it was believed that all vacant stores in the towns commercial area would be reopened.

During this period individual construction project began which replaced older buildings and filled vacant lots as well as renovation projects that were intended to attract new business.

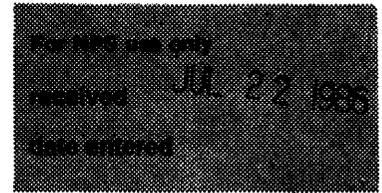
The major addition in the "East End" commercial area was the construction of a new courthouse in 1903. By the early 20th century the 1872 brick courthouse was deemed inadequate to house the offices of county government. This building was demolished and replaced by the present courthouse (Courthouse Commercial Historic District #13) with its distinctive clock tower. The centerpiece of the "East End" area was designed by Montgomery architect B. B. Smith and was constructed at a cost of \$60,000 dollars.

By 1910 the majority of frame commercial buildings in both East and West Ends had been replaced and by 1920, according to O. R. Porter's "Greenville Reminiscences" that appeared in the Advocate during 1921, only two frame commercial buildings that existed in the "West End" section in 1880 remained. In January 1909 C. E. Hamilton and J. F. John began construction of three concrete commercial buildings, all now greatly altered, near the northeast corner of Commerce and Caldwell Streets next to the post office. The Advocate praised Hamilton for having the buildings constructed which were completed in May 1907 by stating,

"Mayor Hamilton deserves commendation as well as remuneration for putting up these buildings where so long stood an eye sore in the shape of a rookery old building. There are few, if finer stores in the city."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 12

The commercial area also underwent a period of renovation prior to World War I. The Advocate noted the renovations in an article entitled "Local Prosperity" which stated,

"We are indeed glad to see the old town as blooming in all its new dress of new buildings and of repaired and modernized old ones. There are now three new store rooms which are being completely made over in the latest improved style, their fronts being removed and plate glass fronts substituted for the old fashioned front that looked bad and gave little or no light. The old F. H. T. Shoe Company's stand and the buildings between the banks are being fixed that way and the store occupied by the Planter's Mercantile Company (East Walnut St.) is also being stuccoed. The Reynold's Mercantile Company's Building has had an addition placed on it . . . We have no commercial club here. Would that we had. So the boom cannot be attributed to that or any other cause except that is a case of natural growth."

Another project that was aimed at the renovation effort was the paving of Commerce Street. This paving covered the whole length of Commerce and when it was completed work began on streets leading off the main commercial thoroughfare.

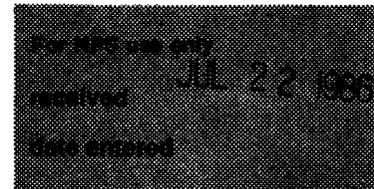
During the early years of the 20th century the block at the corner of Commerce and Park Street, across from the Greenville Public School, was set aside for a Memorial Park (Individual Property #30) that would honor the memory of the Confederate soldiers of Butler County. The park was the showplace of a sculpture of a Confederate Soldier that had been purchased by the Father Regan Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy and unveiled on June 1903. The U. D. C. employed a landscape gardner to landscape and care for the grounds but this was delayed because of the large amount of debris that had been left in the park during the remodeling of the First Methodist Church which faced the park. The plans for the beautification of the grounds called for the planting of several hundred bushes to be used as hedges and for the planting of shade trees. In March 1909 Mayor C. E. Hamilton donated the fountain which is located within the Park and the Eliza Parks Chapter of the U.D.C. donated iron benches for use as seating.

During the first two decades of the 20th century the movement of residential development that had begun during the later part of the 19th century along Fort Dale Street and along the College Street area as well as south of Commerce Street, east of the railroad, continued to expand. Examples of this development include the Beeland-Mallett House (South Greenville Historic District #84) on the corner of South Hickory and Dunklin Streets and the Hamilton House (College Street-Fort Dale Historic District #18) built by Mayor Claude E. Hamilton on the corner of College and Hamilton Streets.

The first bungalow erected in Greenville (South Greenville Historic District #22) was constructed during 1909 by contractor B. F. Jones and was

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 13

built on a lot located between the C. B. Herbert House and St. Thomas Episcopal Church.

The first attempt at a subdivision in Greenville was also developed during this period. The Chestnut Street Heights subdivision was developed in the area between Cedar and Thames Streets, facing Chestnut Street and was planned and promoted by the Greenville Improvement Company. The Company "graded, terraced and beautified" the lots and advertised the availability of water and sewage facilities as well as electricity. The lots were sold at public auction on the steps of the courthouse on September 9, 1909 for \$125 dollars and up per lot, with terms of twenty per-cent down, balance at the rate of 2% per month with interest at 6% on deferred payments. As there were only a few lots available in the subdivision the development was relatively small. This attempt at a subdivision apparently met with little success as there are no homes in this section which date from the period of original development.

1920-1940

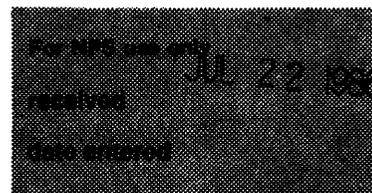
During the 1920's there were few major changes within either commercial area on Commerce Street. Some of the remaining residences along the street were soon used as well as the Ehlbert Hotel which was demolished to make room for a service station. During the early 1920's the Bank of Greenville and the First National Bank located at North Church and West Commerce were renovated and expanded into the two commercial buildings that were located adjacent to each bank.

During 1928 the commercial area around the courthouse was the scene of a major fire which destroyed the Thagard Building, the Whiddon Building and the Beeland Warehouse which were adjacent to the Steward Drug Building (Courthouse Commercial Historic District #9). These three buildings were completely rebuilt on the same locations and conformed to more modern commercial styles that were in vogue during the period. Also constructed during the 1920's was the large Beeland Brothers Mercantile Company Building (Courthouse Commercial Historic District #1) which is considered to be Greenville's first department store building.

During the late 1920's the movement which had begun in the late 19th century to acquire a cotton mill for Greenville was at last successful as the Alabama Mills Incorporated located a textile plant on South College Street. The mill and its associated village were constructed during 1928. The mill was constructed by Baston-Cook and Company of West Point, Georgia. The company had just recently completed the new Boylston Mill in Montgomery when it received this contract. The mill village of 35 houses was constructed from April thru July 1928 under the supervision of Charles T. Johnson. Because of additions the mill has lost its integrity and at present the mill houses have all received the addition of either asbestos or aluminum siding. Also constructed during the late 1920's was the Butler County High School and the Greenville Grammar School both located off Fort Dale Street.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

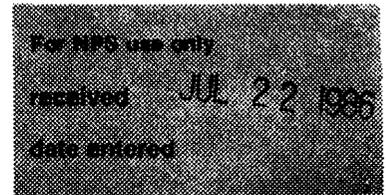
Page 14

During the 1920's Greenville was the recipient of several Works Progress Administration and Public Works Administration constructed buildings which included the National Guard Armory (Courthouse Commercial Historic District #14), completed in late 1936 on the southeast corner of South Conecuh and Walnut Street; a \$75,000 dollar auditorium, cafeteria and manual training building at the Butler County High School, along with a \$9,000 dollar three classroom addition at the Greenville Grammar School; as well as a new city hall (Individual Property #17). The city hall, located on East Commerce Street on the site of the old Greenville Public School, was erected during 1937 as a W. P. A. project at a cost of approximately \$30,000 dollars. Designed by Montgomery architect Moreland Griffith Smith, the building was to provide offices for all city departments and some county offices as well as space for a city auditorium.

The best examples of residential construction during this period include the Tudor style W. S. Blackwell House (Individual Property #15) on Fort Dale Street; the Wilkinson House (College Street-Fort Dale Historic District #9) constructed around 1935 on the lot once occupied by the 1860 Thigpen-Porter House (College Street-Fort Dale #10) which had been moved to the adjacent lot and the Howard Cheatam House (College Street-Fort Dale #7) on Fort Dale Street which was originally built in the mid-1870's as a brick stable for Judge J. C. Richardson and was renovated into a residence in 1938.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

- 1) Hahn, Marilyn Davis. Butler County in the Nineteenth Century, Private Publication, 1978.
- 2) Little, John Buckner. History of Butler County, Alabama 1815 to 1885, Elm St. Printing Co., Cincinnati, 1885.
- 3) Kocher, A. E. and Westover, H. L. Soil Survey of Butler County, Alabama, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Government Printing Office, Washington, 1909.
- 4) Owen, Thomas. History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, S. J. Clarke Publishing, Chicago, IL, 1921.
- 5) Owen, Thomas. Alabama Official and Statistical Register, 1903, 1907, 1911, 1913, 1915, 1923, 1927, 1935, State of Alabama Department of Archives and History, Brown Printing Co., Montgomery.
- 6) Quadrennial Report of the Adjutant General, State of Alabama 1938, Wetumpka Publishing Company 1938.
- 7) Butler County, Alabama and Greenville, Its County Seat, C. B. Gamble Printing Company, Greenville, Alabama 1909.

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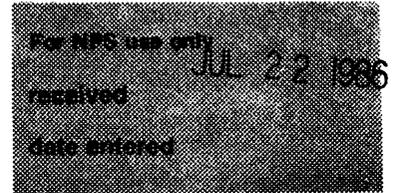
- 8) Crenshaw, Myra Ware, "Early Days in Greenville," Alabama Life, Vol. #1, Issue #2, Sept.-Oct., 1978.
- 9) Fisher, Harold, "South Alabama Town, Already One of State's Most Attractive, Still Builds," Birmingham News, Oct. 6, 1936.
- 10) Porter, O. R. "Greenville Reminiscences," Greenville Advocate, April 8, 1921-Oct. 12, 1921.
- 11) "Interesting Butler Homes," Greenville Advocate, July 12, 1951-April 8, 1954.
- 12) Stanley, J. B., "Greenville, Alabama," The L & N Employee's Magazine, August 1929.
- 13) "W.P.A. Project To Cost Between \$25,000 and \$35,000, Director Says," Birmingham News, November 24, 1936.

NEWSPAPERS

- 14) Greenville Advocate, October 1874-1877; November 1877-1881; November 18, 1896-October 18, 1899; October 25, 1899-October 3, 1900; January 6, 1909-February 21, 1912; November 4, 1914-December 31, 1919; January 5, 1924-December 31, 1925; July 5, 1927-December 26, 1928.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 2

- 15) Greenville Messenger, February 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20; April 3, 10, 17; May 1; June 26; July 3, 1861.

INTERVIEWS

- 16) Informal Interviews with Mrs. Guy Walton, Mrs. H. P. Martin, Mrs. Mary Kendrick Bracken and Mrs. Hubert Peek - August 2, 1985.

MAPS

- 17) Sanborn Insurance Maps - October 1884, May 1889, November 1893, June 1898, July 1903, November 1909, August 1927.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 143

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Greenville Multiple Resource Area
State Butler County, ALABAMA

Cover Amy Schilazel 11/4/86

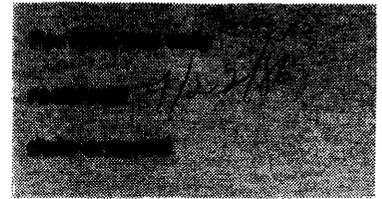
Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- ✓ 1. Blackwell, W.S., House Entered in the National Register *for* Keeper Arlene Byers 9/4/86 Attest _____
- ✓ 2. Butler Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church *for* Keeper Arlene Byers 9/4/86 Attest _____
- ✓ 3. Buell--Stallings--Stewart House *for* Keeper Arlene Byers 9/4/86 Attest _____
- ✓ 4. Confederate Park *for* Keeper Arlene Byers 9/4/86 Attest _____
- ✓ 5. Dickenson House *for* Keeper Arlene Byers 9/4/86 Attest _____
- ✓ 6. Evens--McMullan Entered in the National Register *for* Keeper Arlene Byers 9/4/86 Attest _____
- ✓ 7. First Baptist Church Entered in the National Register *for* Keeper Arlene Byers 9/4/86 Attest _____
- ✓ 8. First Presbyterian Church *for* Keeper Arlene Byers 9/4/86 Attest _____
- ✓ 9. Gaston--Perdue House *for* Keeper Arlene Byers 9/4/86 Attest _____
- ✓ 10. Graydon House *for* Keeper Arlene Byers 9/4/86 Attest _____

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 2 of 3

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Greenville Multiple Resource Area
State Butler County, ALABAMA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

✓ 11. Greenville City Hall

~~Substantive Review~~

Keeper

Clay Schlegel 11/4/86

Attest

Bruce J. Noble 11/4/86

✓ 12. Greenville Public School Complex

Entered in the National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

✓ 13. Hawthorne--Coward House

for Keeper

Delores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

✓ 14. Hinson House

for Keeper

Delores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

✓ 15. House at 308 South Street

for Keeper

Delores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

✓ 16. Lane--Kendrick--Sherling House

Entered in the National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

✓ 17. Little--Stabler House

for Keeper

Delores Byers 11/4/86

Attest

✓ 18. McMullan--Skinner House

Entered in the National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

✓ 19. Theological Building--A.M.E. Zion Theological Institute

for Keeper

Delores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

P ✓ 20. Ward Nicholson Corner Store

for Keeper

Delores Byers 11/4/86

Attest

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 3 of 3

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Greenville Multiple Resource Area
State Butler County, ALABAMA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

✓ 21. Wright-Kilgore House

for Keeper Arlene Byers 9/4/86

Attest

✓ 22. Commerce Street Residential
Historic District

for Keeper Arlene Byers 8/28/86

Attest

✓ 23. East Commerce Street
Historic District

for Keeper Arlene Byers 11/4/86

Attest

24. Fort Dale--College Street
Historic District

for Keeper Arlene Byers 8/28/86

Attest

25. King Street Historic
District

for Keeper Arlene Byers 8/28/86

Attest

✓ 26. Post Office Historic
District

for Keeper Arlene Byers 11/4/86

Attest

27. South Greenville Historic
District

for Keeper Arlene Byers 8/28/86

Attest

28. South Street Historic
District

for Keeper Arlene Byers 8/28/86

Attest

29. West Commerce Street
Historic District

for Keeper Arlene Byers 8/28/86

Attest

30.

Keeper

Attest