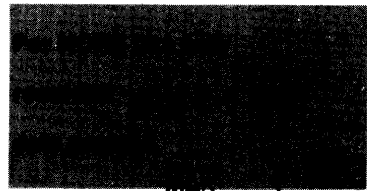


**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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



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

**1. Name**

historic Court Square Historic District

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number <sup>Court Sq</sup> 21-35 Court Street Plaza; <sup>Ave.</sup> 1-2 Dexter; 18-24 N. Court ~~Street; Court Square~~  not for publication

city, town Montgomery vicinity of congressional district 2

state Alabama code 01 county Montgomery code 101

**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 type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Multiple

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Courthouse

street & number 142 Washington Avenue

city, town Montgomery 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**

Montgomery's Court Square is a small triangular space formed by the meeting of two grid patterns with different orientations. The district, which is focused on the western side of the square, consists of a row of stores south of Dexter Avenue, the fountain, the two corner buildings of Dexter, and two superb buildings north of Dexter, which is one of the major streets intersecting at the square. From 1823 until 1854, the western side of the square contained the county courthouse which was replaced by a row of small stores in the mid-1800s and by a large department store in the 1960s. The two anchor buildings for Commerce Street, the other major thoroughfare intersecting at the square, consisted of the Exchange Hotel and the First Alabama Bank. The former was demolished in the early 1970s and the latter, one of the city's major early skyscrapers, was dramatically altered in the late 1970s.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** \_\_\_\_\_ **Builder/Architect** \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Montgomery's Court Square is primarily significant as the psychological and physical center of downtown Montgomery, a distinction it has had since the founding of the city in 1819. It is an oddly-shaped space formed by the boundary of the two rival communities which consolidated to form the city, and is strongly associated with the founding and early history of the city. The site of the county courthouse (from 1823 until 1854) and the major public watering hole, it served as a popular site for sales, auctions, and the exchange of news and gossip. On its perimeter have been some of the city's major commercial and financial establishments, and it is still flanked by some of the most outstanding buildings in the city. Architecturally, the district contains excellent and representative examples of 19th and early 20th century commercial architecture. Additionally, its focal point, the Fountain (which has capped the artesian basin since 1885), is one of the city's major landmarks and an excellent example of a 19th-century cast-iron fountain. Although the western side of the square was demolished in the 1960s for an urban renewal project, and the anchor buildings on the Commerce Street entrance are lost, the district retains a very strong sense of its identity as an urban center.

\*\*\*\*\*

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED  
UTM NOT VERIFIED

# 10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property 3.35

Quadrangle name Montgomery North

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A 

1	6	5	6	5	1	0	0	3	5	8	2	4	0	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B 

1	6	5	6	5	1	0	0	3	5	8	2	1	4	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

C 

1	6	5	6	4	9	4	0	3	5	8	2	1	4	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

D 

1	6	5	6	4	9	4	0	3	5	8	2	4	0	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

E 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

F 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

G 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

H 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See line on attached map. Boundary includes city owned plazas at Court Square & those buildings facing the Square on the East side of Court, except the First Alabama Annex.

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

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marilyn Sullivan (Landmarks Foundation) & Ellen Mertins

organization Alabama Historical Commission date December 1, 1981

street & number 725 Monroe Street telephone 832-6621

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *[Signature]*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 11/20/82

**For HCRS use only**

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

*[Signature]*  
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the National Register

date 3/1/82

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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Contributing Structures

1. Shimbaum's (35 Court Street Plaza): c. 1910, Commercial Brick 3 story, brick, polychromatic brickwork, grouped triple windows, parapeted flat roof; first floor altered, 2nd and 3rd floor windows infilled.
3. Gerson Building (25 Court Street Plaza): c. 1910; Commercial Brick, 2 story, brick, grouped triple window flanked by single windows, metal cornice below low parapet; first floor altered, 2nd floor window sash removed.
8. Winter Building (2 Dexter): c. 1840s, Italianate; 3 story, brick, low hipped roof, bracketed eaves, recently rehabilitated (NRHP 1-14-72).
9. Klein and Son (1 Dexter): 1856; Italian Renaissance Revival; 3 story, cast iron trim, designed by Stephen Decatur Button; street level altered to accommodate display windows.
10. Klein's Clock (Sidewalk to the SW of Klein's): 20th c. cast-iron street Clock. Seth Thomas.
11. Maner Building (18 North Court Street): 1866; Second Empire, 3 1/2 story, brick, mansard roof with dormers, cast iron window hood molds, bracketed cornice with dentils below mansard; first floor altered.
12. Montgomery Fair Building (24 North Court Street): 1907, with 1949 annex and ground floor updating, strong Chicago influences, 4 story, glazed white brick with blue tile designs, four ornated sculptured heads; blue carrera glass ground floor updating matches blue of tiles.
13. Court Square Fountain (Court Square): mid 1880s; cast-iron fountain attributed to the J. L. Mott Iron Works of New York.

Conditionally contributing:

2. Rosen Jewelry (29-31 Court Street Plaza): two antebellum, 2-story brick buildings with low gable roofs, end-wall parapets and old brick in rear. One contains original interior with Federal mantels and wide pine flooring. New brick facade may be removable.
4. City Pawn Shop (23 Court Street Plaza): c. 1905; 2 story, brick with central palladian window flanked by single windows with exaggerated flat arches; ground floor altered, upper floor covered with corrugated metal facade. Metal facade is removable without damage to front.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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5. Old Nathan Rosen Jewelry (21 Court Street Plaza): c. 1890; 2 story, alley infill.
6. U. S. Army Recruiting/House of Eyeglasses (15-19 Court Street Plaza): prior to 1866 with 1870s corrugated metal and brick facades; 3 story, brick, gable roof. New facades may be removable.
7. Seawell Shoes (13 Court Street Plaza): c. 1851 with new stucco facade; 2 story, brick, hipped roof, facade parapet. Facade may be removable.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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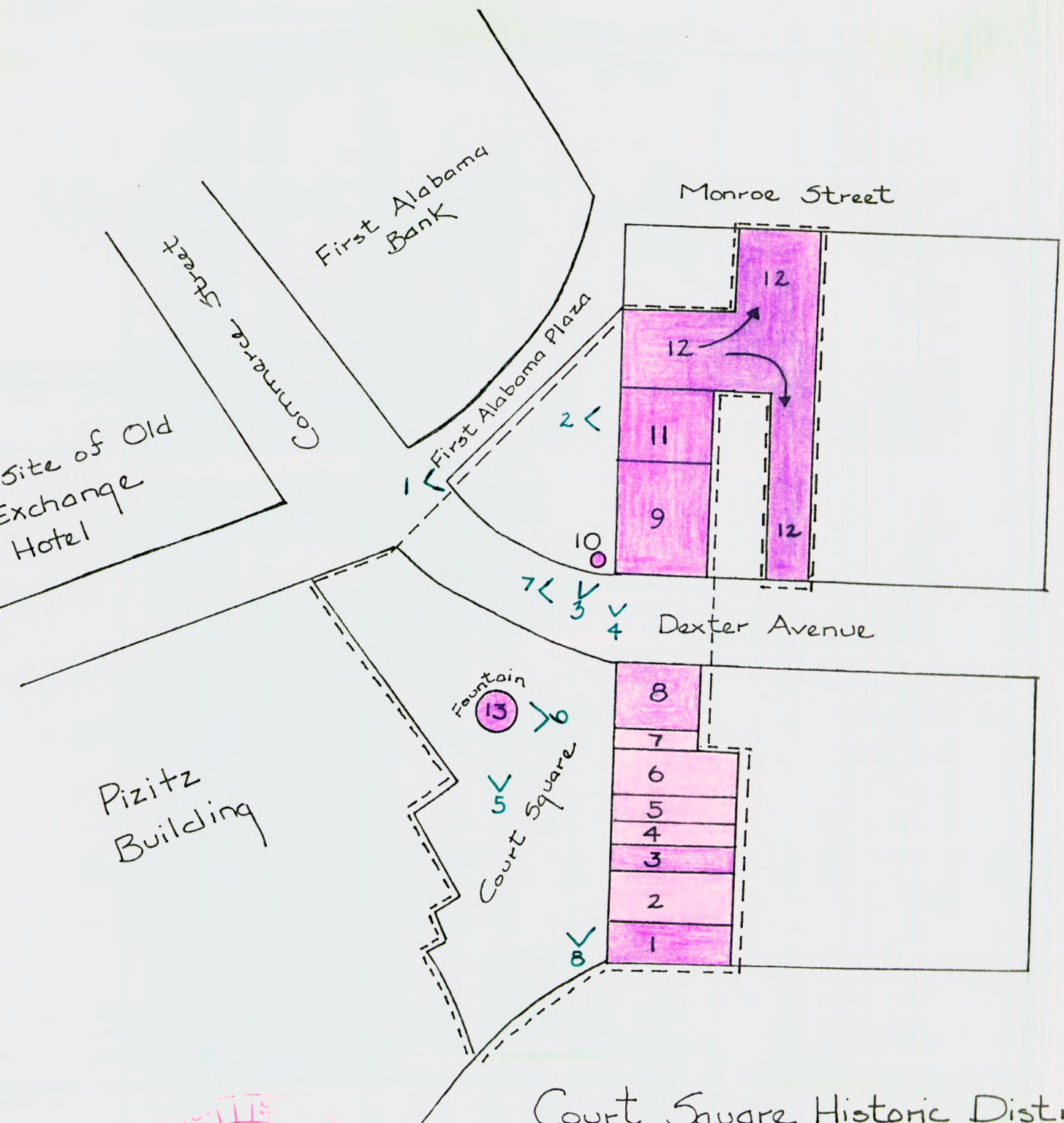
Flynt, Wayne. Montgomery, An Illustrated History. Windsor Publications, Woodland Hills, California, 1980.

Williams, Clanton W. The Early History of Montgomery and Incidentally of the State of Alabama. Confederate Publishing Co. University Alabama, 1979.

Gerson Family Folder

Montgomery Business Files - Department Stores

Montgomery City Directories - 1859-present



### Court Square Historic District

- Contributing
- Conditionally Contributing
- Non-Contributing
- - - Boundary

