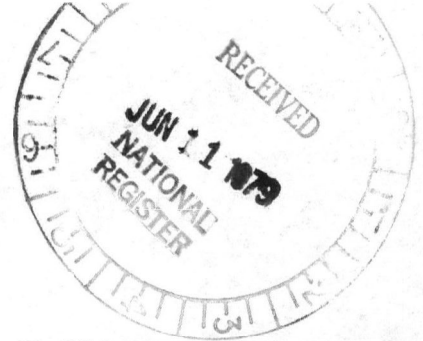


21. SCHIFFMAN BUILDING  
231 East Side Square

Lawrence B. Goldsmith, Jr.  
206 Gates Avenue  
Huntsville, Alabama 35801

Lot 5, Block 37, Old Town; 25' (East Side Square) X 85' (Eustis)  
16 538060 3843000

Built between 1835 and 1861: Architect/Builder unknown  
1895: George W. Thompson, Nashville, architect for remodeling  
D. E. Dinnedy, Nashville, contractor



DESCRIPTION

The Schiffman Building is all that remains of an antebellum, brick structure. The original building was three stories high and divided into three bays by massive flat pilasters with capitals and topped by a plain entablature. In 1895 the south third of the building was extensively remodeled in the Romanesque Revival style. It is this remodeling that remains today; the other two bays of the building have been demolished within the last ten years.

The facade is of quarry-faced limestone while the side wall is plastered and scored to resemble masonry. The entrance was shifted to the north side of the facade, and a large window opens into the president's office. Above the entrance is a dressed stone slab bearing the name "I. Schiffman," and above the window is a heavy keystone carved with a foliate design. The second floor has two narrow windows over the entrance topped by a smooth stone lintel and a small scale replica of the cornice. A bowed bay containing two larger windows protrudes over the president's office. On the third floor two windows are grouped above the bay while the third is centered over the entrance. A dressed stone lintel extends across the facade and forms the base for stone arches which spring over each window. Each corner is accented by an attenuated turret that extends above the heavy stone cornice. The cornice continues along the side wall of the building which is divided into five recessed bays by plain pilasters and an entablature that were features of the antebellum structure. The windows were enlarged during the 1895 remodeling and an entrance added in the last bay.

The interior of the first floor is unaltered except for carpeting and fluorescent fixtures. The ceiling is of pressed tin painted white, and the walls are painted plaster above paneled cherry wainscot. The space is divided into four offices by half walls topped by glass partitions and panels of open metalwork above which the floor is completely open. All of the woodwork is cherry; the frames of windows and doorways are fluted. The two front offices each have a corner fireplace with an over mantel mirror. The original walk-in safe with scrolled

Schiffman Building, 231 East Side Square, Huntsville, Alabama  
Continuation:

pediment remains in the back.

#### SIGNIFICANCE

The Schiffman Building is one of the few extant antebellum commercial buildings and the only Richardsonian Romanesque building in the city. Its facade and interior have not been altered since 1895. In this year the Southern Building and Loan Association remodeled it in the Romanesque Revival style, both inside and out, at a cost of \$18,000. Issac Schiffman purchased the structure in 1905 and established a loan office there the following year; the building has remained in his family since then. Mr. Schiffman came from Germany when he was a teenager and went to work for his uncles who ran a mercantile business in Huntsville. He eventually took over the business, selling it a few years before his death. He was reputed to be a millionaire when he died.

A minor historical note is that Tallulah Bankhead was born in the second floor apartment in 1902 when her father, William Bankhead, was a lawyer in Huntsville. He had served as city attorney, 1900-01, and later was an Alabama representative to the 65th and 66th U. S. Congresses.



SCHIFFMAN BUILDING (#21) SEP 22 1980  
Huntsville, Alabama  
Photographer unknown; 1960s  
Huntsville Public Library  
View from the south  
JUL 9 1980

SEP 22 1980

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

see continuation sheet

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

UTM NOT VERIFIED

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

UTM REFERENCES

see individual inventory sheets

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	D	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

see continuation sheet

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE: Linda Bayer, Planner

ORGANIZATION: Huntsville Planning Commission/Alabama Historical Commission DATE: May 31, 1979

STREET & NUMBER: 725 Monroe Street TELEPHONE: (205) 832-6621

CITY OR TOWN: Montgomery STATE: Alabama 36130

# 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

*Miss B. Forward*

TITLE SAPO, Alabama

DATE June 5, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*W. Ray Luce*  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 9/22/80

ATTEST:

*Carl Duke*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 9/22/80

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Carl Duke*

2/2/81



Downtown Huntsville Multiple Resource  
Area/Madison Co. AL

SEP 22 1980

SCHIFFMAN BUILDING (#21)

Huntsville, Alabama

Linda Bayer; October, 1978

Huntsville Planning Commission

View from the west

34.

JUN 11 1979

Please refer to the map in the  
Multiple Property Cover Sheet  
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000013

