

**LOCAL DESIGNATION REPORT:
MADISON HISTORIC DISTRICT**

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Submitted to
City of Madison

Submitted by
Madison Historic Preservation Commission

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Preface

The purpose of any designation report to provide the local governing body the information necessary to make an informed decision regarding the designation of a historic property or historic district. Madison's Historic Preservation Ordinance (f/k/a Historic Preservation Commission Ordinance), adopted by the Mayor and Council of the City of Madison, Georgia on April 13, 1987 and amended on December 14, 1998, provides for a local designation process and sets forth the requirements for a local designation report. The Ordinance states that "The report will follow the guidelines for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places and shall consist of (a) a physical description, (b) a statement of significance, (c) a map of the proposed boundary, and (d) representative photographs." For a historic district designation, an inventory list of all the properties within the proposed district is also included to justify the boundaries of the proposed district.

The currently proposed Madison Historic District draws upon the local historic district designated in 1989 (Chapman, 1988) and upon Madison's National Register district designated in 1974 (Macgregor) and expanded in 1990 (Raflo, 1989). The 1989 National Register nomination integrates the work of the prior reports using a format consistent with the requirements of the local designation report. The information remains largely valid today, in large part due to the protection provided by Madison's earlier version of the historic preservation ordinance and the designation of a local historic district.

Therefore, in an effort to save time and expense, the present designation report will excerpt the background information sections of history, historic character, and significance directly from the 1989 National Register nomination for the Madison Historic District. These sections are noted with an asterisk and a corresponding footnote. Bracketed and italicized text has been added to these narratives in the few instances where changes in the district require an update of the information.

The reader will find new work concentrated in the boundary justification section. It is here that proposed changes to the boundaries of the original local historic district are delineated and explained. The ten intervening years have brought changes which suggest these adjustments of the district boundaries. Some are physical changes – alterations to the historic resources themselves; some are political changes – changes to the city limits, the creation of other management tools, etc.; and some are philosophical changes – an evolution of the goals of historic preservation both locally and nationally.

For visual representations of the proposed Madison Historic District, Attachment A contains a map which delineates the proposed boundaries in relationship to the previous boundaries and Attachment B contains representative photographs.

The Madison Historic Preservation Commission recommends that the currently proposed historic district is eligible for designation as defined by the Madison Historic Preservation Ordinance, which is: "A district shall be eligible for designation if it constitutes a geographically definable area, urban or rural, which contains places, sites, buildings, structures, or works of art, or a combination thereof which: 1) have special character or special historical or cultural interest or value, 2) represent one or more periods or styles of architecture typical of one or more eras in the history of the municipality, county, state, or region, and 3) cause such area, by reason of such factors, to constitute a visually perceptible section of the municipality." The following report is submitted to the Madison City Council for formal consideration of the designation of the Madison Historic District.

Developmental History*

*Excerpted from Raflo, Lisa. "National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form." 1989. Filed at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

Madison was officially founded on May 11, 1809, when approximately 100 acres at the center of newly established Morgan County were set aside for a county seat. Under the authority of the State and the direction of the just elected county officials, the town was initially divided into 48 lots, each measuring 100 by 200 feet, which in turn were sold almost immediately to potential settlers and investors. The name chosen by the county officers commemorated James Madison, the fourth president of the U.S.; Madison, in fact, began office the same year. Following a similarly patriotic theme, principal streets were eventually named after other presidents: Monroe, Washington, and Jefferson. A fourth street was named after John Hancock, the President of the Second Congress.

The establishment of Madison was part of a much larger process of settlement of the Georgia frontier. Land for the county and town was a result of the Creek cessions of 1802-1805. During this period a vast tract of land west of the Oconee River was acquired as a result of several Indian treaties, beginning with that at Fort Wilkinson of 1802. These treaties recognized the inevitability of western settlement due to the pressure of the growing population in the east. Morgan was one of ten counties established between 1802 and 1815.

One of the first orders of business for the new county was the election of officers to oversee the administration of the county and award land and record transactions. Most important for the history of Madison, they also oversaw the establishment of the town.

It was shortly after this that the town was surveyed into the 48 lots and indicated on the first town map of 1809. Lots for the court and jail and other community purposes, including churches, were reserved by the city. The rest were sold, at 12 months credit, to pay for the construction of county buildings as well as roads and other costs.

Madison's town plan followed one of three typical plan types for the new counties. All were rectilinear, ultimately reflecting Georgia's first colony at Savannah, as well as Renaissance-inspired town planning ideals. Madison's was what has come to be recognized as the Washington-type plan characterized by a central square with principal streets entering at right angles at the corners. This was probably a reflection of the fact that many Madison and Morgan County settlers came from the Washington (Georgia) area, which constituted the edge of the earlier Georgia frontier.

Madison was quickly settled after its foundation. By the time of the city's incorporation by the Legislature on December 12, 1809, all 48 original lots had been sold for a total revenue of \$7,310. In all 33 men purchased lots, among them Reuben Rogers, formerly of Columbia and Warren Counties, and Joseph Morrow from Greene County. Some of these men actually settled in the town; others held lots speculatively, selling off their holdings within a few years or further subdividing their lots for homes and businesses.

Records of land transactions suggest that the town was quickly thriving. From an early period Madison served as a stop for stage coaches en route along the main route from Philadelphia via Charleston to New Orleans. A number of taverns were established to serve this trade, including, according to tradition, the old Vason house on the present Old Post Road south of the town center. Other businesses also prospered, mostly serving the surrounding population but also serving the growing number of travelers. These included blacksmith shops, carriage shops, leather shops, and so on. Also, nearby planters began increasingly to purchase in-town lots for private houses, beginning a tradition that was to increase as the century progressed.

To accommodate Madison's growth, the city limits were extended by an Act of Legislature in 1822 to include "all land within one-half mile of the public square." Additional lots were surveyed following the general rectilinear principles of the original town, with increasing variation once these began to intersect with traditional thoroughfares at the city's

edges. Still, Madison's growth was controlled and orderly. During the 1820s and 1830s, the town consisted of large residential lots along uniform streets, with occasional older houses--once outside the town proper--gradually being absorbed into the newer residential areas.

The original town lots, particularly those near the town square, were especially subject to development pressure. A city map of 1837 provides some idea of development patterns. Most of the newer lots were still individually owned, though there were an increasing number of subdivided lots and, less clear on the map but apparent from other sources, many sub-leased properties. Streets were maintained at forty feet in width. But there were numerous smaller alleys transacting the original larger blocks. Sizes of original lots varied as well, though frontages, now at 180 feet, remained uniform. Depths, however, varied from 250 feet to over 300 feet. Several lots were assigned to schools. The Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist churches also owned adjacent lots to provide revenue for church buildings.

Most of the town's growth occurred south and west of the original core, though increasingly houses were built along the north/south spine of Monroe, soon to be called Main Street.

In the 1820s and 1830s, Madison consisted of an assortment of wooden houses, many of only one or two rooms, a few institutional or religious buildings, and relatively scattered collection of mostly frame sheds for industrial or commercial use and some brick buildings. By 1827, the town could claim, as Sherwood's Gazetteer points out, an "excellent brick courthouse and jail." There was also, according to Sherwood, both a male and female academy, "one a fine building two stories," to which "a good library" was attached and also a Masonic Hall. An 1829 Gazetteer noted that a Methodist Chapel had been built and that there were numerous stores and offices and at least 60 residences.

While cotton had been grown successfully at least since the 1780s, it was only after 1793 with Eli Whitney's introduction of the cotton gin at Mulberry Grove on the coast of Georgia that large scale cotton plantation proved practical and profitable. Plantations were converted to cotton in the coastal area shortly afterward. But it was the Piedmont, with its dark, fertile soil, that many looked upon as the ideal cotton growing land. Coupled with improved cotton gins of the early 1800s, cotton production by 1820 had begun to supplant earlier subsistence crops in the region. High prices, beginning in 1807, and booming during the period of the War of 1812, ensured cotton's success in the region.

The shift to cotton was to have a great impact upon both Madison and Morgan County. While originally a trading and governmental center for a pioneering group of yeomen farmers, Madison was quickly becoming the county town for a new class of cotton planters. Wheat, oats, corn, vegetables, livestock were all replaced by the new and immensely profitable monoculture. The cotton plantations, of course, were larger and depended increasingly on slave labor, quickly altering population ratios in the county. By 1838, Morgan County's total population of over 9,000 consisted of 3,820 whites and 5,908 blacks. It was this new, slave-based economy that supported the large in-town second homes that were coming to predominate in Madison and, also, that could fuel the sustained development and redevelopment of in-town lots. Increasingly, Madison's leadership would be drawn from the new cotton aristocracy.

Cotton production had spawned other industries, particularly cotton oil manufacturing and cotton gin companies. In 1853 the Madison Steam Mill Company was founded with a working capital of \$69,280. This company, which included 26 looms and 2,016 spindles, manufactured tacking, ribbons and cloth. During peak production periods 75 operators produced up to 1,040 yards a day. Other similar companies would follow, providing employment for a growing in-town population. In 1854, for example, White's Collections would list over 31 "manufacturing establishments" in the town and nearby countryside. These included nine grist mills, three cotton mills, seven saw mills, as well as special industries such as soapstone milling.

The economic growth of the town and county provided the foundation for a growing bourgeoisie, with less immediate connection to the land. This group included doctors, lawyers, merchants, artisans and some whose professions straddled agriculture and other fields.

Madison's new population entered wholeheartedly into civic affairs. Literary and philosophical societies sprang up. There were dramatic performances and other entertainments at Foster's Hall off the town square.

By 1850, Madison had established itself more generally as an important educational center in the region. In addition to the several small primary and secondary schools dating from the 1810s, two new institutions were established within a few weeks of each other for the higher education of young ladies. These were essentially finishing schools, incorporating both the last years of secondary education and the equivalent of the first year or two of college.

The first of the schools was the Madison Collegiate Institution, a Baptist School, founded in 1849 and incorporated by Act of Georgia Legislature in 1850. Classes were held in a building at what is presently 472 South Main Street, now a private house, advertised in the school prospectus as "large and commodious, containing an assembly room of forty feet square, besides four large reception rooms, and a smaller house containing two rooms." Shortly afterward, a new brick building, measuring 50 by 108 feet, was constructed next door and later in 1850, the school's name was changed to the Georgia Female College, suggestive of its grander expectations. Capitalizing on Madison's reputation, the prospectus claimed "the name of Madison is synonymous with wealth, refinement and morality," and the college attracted a growing number of students during the 1850s. Most were from nearby Georgia towns, though there were some students, presumably with family connections, from as far away as Texas and South America. Courses included foreign languages, philosophy, history, botany, geography, geology, and also - as a reflection of the students' future positions in society - music, painting, and work with "wax fruits and flowers." There was also need for professional training as teachers, and a Normal School course was instituted in 1855. By 1856, the college could claim 62 graduates and 102 students in residence. Most of the students boarded in the house of teachers or other upstanding Madisonians at a rate of \$10 to \$12 per month.

The second finishing school was the Methodist Female College, also founded in 1850. The Methodist College - known as Madison Female College - offered a similar course of instruction in its building on present-day Academy Street, near the site of the present Episcopal Church. Madison Female College provided an education for young ladies, presumably destined to serve as wives of Georgia's businessmen and planters. As one commemoration speaker pointed out, "The true nobility of woman is to keep her own sphere." Both schools continued until the 1860s, when their operations were interrupted by the Civil War. The Georgia Female College would be revived for a few years afterward, but never succeeded to the degree it had during the 1850s.

The two colleges were important cultural markers in the town. Both included libraries, which were used by the public, and hosted events important to town life. Several boys' academies also continued during this period, including one in which Alexander Hamilton Stephens, later Vice President of the Confederacy, taught for a short period. One school was located on South Second Street, the site later of the Newton House, and another in the early Walker House, now Thurleston Hall.

The growth of education institutions was matched, by churches and church-related societies. By the 1850s, there were four major denominations in town; the Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and the Episcopalians. There was also a small Roman Catholic congregation. Most had their own meeting house. In fact, the Methodists had occupied at least three buildings by this period. Their most recent church was an 1841 brick structure on

Academy Street (now the Episcopal Church). In 1858, the Baptists built their classically styled meeting house on South Main Street. The Presbyterians, who had worshipped in assembly rooms at one of the male academies since 1821, built a new sanctuary, also on South Main Street, in 1842. The Episcopalians worshipped in a small frame building, which has since been destroyed. Records are less clear for black congregations, though balconies were provided for blacks in both the Presbyterian and Baptist churches. Also, an earlier wood Methodist Church became the property of a black congregation, now Clarke Chapel Baptist Church, which moved it to its present site near the railroad. Other black congregations, including Calvary Baptist on Second Street and the AME in the black residential area called Canaan, also date from the second half of the nineteenth century. The Calvary church was built in 1873, on the site of the earlier white Baptist Church; the AME Church dates from the early 1880s.

Educational and religious institutions tended to promote literary interests in the town. As suggested, there were a number of literary societies. Also, Bible groups and Sunday schools flourished, particularly after the 1840s in the wake of the Revival movement.

There were growing secular interests as well. The city's first newspaper, The Southern Miscellany, was founded by Col. C. R. Hanleiter in 1840.

The antebellum era was the great boom period also in the residential development of the town. Undeveloped lots were finally developed and some large lots were subdivided. In 1849 the town's boundaries were extended to one mile from the town square.

Increasingly, single and double room cottages had been expanded or replaced by two-story frame dwellings, now arranged formally around a central hallway or, in some cases, around an enclosed open passageway or "dog trot." More homes were two rooms rather than one room deep, and houses with four side chimneys instead of two became more common. "High-style" features, derived from pattern books or built by itinerant and resident carpenters, gradually entered into the building vocabulary.

In the 1840s and 1850s, the newly fashionable Greek Revival began to predominate both among institutional and commercial buildings and for residences. Called by the architectural historian Talbot Hamlin, the first truly American style, the Greek Revival was especially well-suited to the wood construction of America's hinterlands.

Characterized by simple lines and square or rectangular features, the classical Greek inspired style was easily replicated in wood by local carpenters who could now ignore the complicated logarithmic tables of Federal style or Adam architecture. The Greek Revival style also allowed for easy adaptations. Older buildings, such as the Samuel Shields House "Hilltop," built in the 1830s, were dressed up with Greek Revival gabled porticos. Other houses, such as the Vason House of c. 1810, would receive temple fronts of giant order columns stretching across their facades. As a result, Madison would be blessed with an outstanding assortment of Greek Revival architecture, including buildings such as the Joel Abbot Billips House (1857) and the Jephtha Vining-Harris House (1850), the Carter-Newton House (1849), and the Martin-Baldwin-Weaver House (1850), all now viewed as outstanding examples of their type. There were also masonry, Greek Revival commercial buildings, nearly all destroyed during later fires, and the impressive Presbyterian Church, also of masonry but still Greek Revival in character, built in 1842 on South Main Street.

The new, stylish houses added to Madison's reputation as a progressive and cultured town. But it was really the economic conditions of the county that made the city's transformation possible. By the 1840s subsistence farming had been nearly altogether supplanted by cotton production averaging 12,000 to 14,000 bales a year.

The key to cotton profits, however, lay in transportation. Madison was in an advantageous position during the 1840s and 1850s. As early as 1837 it was announced that a branch of the Georgia Railroad was to pass through Madison. Originally to be routed through Athens, with a spur line to Madison, by 1839 Madison was to be directly on the line from Augusta to Marthasville (later renamed Atlanta). Judge Adam Saffold donated a right-of-

way through his lands west of the town center and also donated land for a station. The railroad reached Madison in 1840, and, for four years, Madison was the terminus for the Georgia Railroad. Later the Central of Georgia Railroad also established a connection to Madison.

The railroad's presence contributed greatly to Madison's growth. The railroad connected Madison to Augusta, 102 miles east, and via Augusta to Savannah, the main shipping center for cotton in the southeast. The railroad handled all of the locally produced cotton, excluding a relatively small amount diverted to the local manufacturers, as well as cotton for many surrounding counties. During the 1840s as many as 20,000 bales annually were shipped directly from Madison. All of this contributed to Madison's wealth and to its reputation.

Madison's economic prosperity was interrupted, like that of every other town and city in the south, by the Civil War. Support for secession was strong in Madison, understandably given Madison's strong cotton base. But there was notable opposition as well, particularly within the Presbyterian Church. Madison also had several well-known anti-secessionists, including the influential Joshua Hill, who would later be elected to the U.S. Senate.

Still, on July 31, 1861 Madison sent its first contingent, the local militia known as the Panola Guards, off to Richmond to join in the war. A flag was presented by the students of the Georgia Female College as the Guards marched to the station. As result of the war, schools were closed down. Following the lead of the Georgia Baptist Convention, church-inspired schools were made officially available for hospital purposes. Madison women, through organizations such as the Aid Society contributed their share of bandages and clothes for Confederate troops.

Other businesses in town redirected their efforts towards the war as well. R. M. Robertson, who owned a carriage factory on the square, gave it over to the manufacture of tents, harnesses, and leather goods for the war effort. John B. Walker, who had earlier provided funds for the Baptist college and the Baptist Church, planted over 700 acres of sorghum for the troops. In all, about 500 people left for the war, leaving the town businesses in the hands of older men and those unfit for service. Toward the end of the war Madison, like nearby Athens, became a refuge for the war injured.

In early 1864, the war was brought home to Madison when Stoneman's Raiders passed through the town, killing, according to the records, one town resident. Shortly afterwards, in November of the same year, General Slocum's detachment, under Sherman, approached the outskirts of town along the rail from the west, threatening, according to tradition, to destroy the town. An advance party set fire to the warehouse area apparently and, according to contemporary account, carried out some pillaging of private houses. A delegation of citizens met with Slocum to ask him to attempt to control the troops. Slocum in turn complied, but only after a number of homes had been broken into and ransacked. While a systematic destruction of the town was probably never contemplated by Slocum - few Georgia towns were actually burned entirely during Sherman's March - a number of warehouses, as well as the Georgia Railroad depot, and many tons of raw cotton were destroyed.

Madison's legacy from the war included a number of war graves in the city cemetery and a much deflated economy. However, a number of new businesses, including the Madison Petroleum and Madison Mining Company, were begun just after the war. In 1868, Joshua Hill was elected to the U.S. Senate, representing the state's interests there and helping to work toward recovery. As in other southern towns, northern businessmen, despite their now infamous "carpetbagging" reputations, brought new skills and financial backing to the town. Commerce became the key to success for many young Madisonians, who entered the new businesses as clerks and other workers.

Madison's short-lived economic resurgence was interrupted in 1869, when much of the town's commercial center, as well as the Masonic Temple - 42 buildings in all - were

destroyed in a fire. However, many rebuilt immediately, beginning with the reestablishment of M.A. Mustin's business. By the early 1870s a number of other businesses, including the stores of the Berden Brothers, Sebastian Shaw, and the Richter Brothers, were back in operation, as were several law offices, including Methany and Sons, and Billips and Brobson. Most of the new buildings were now brick and "fireproof."

The town's population began to recover as well. In 1870, the first year that census figures for the town were separated out from county statistics, the population was 1,389. By 1880, the figure would top 2,000.

The 1870s and 1880s were periods of returning prosperity. A state commercial directory for 1876 listed 17 general and dry goods stores, seven manufacturers, six physicians, six lawyers, two dentists, three saloons, two banks, one watch and jewelry shop, three flour and grist mills, four blacksmiths, one barber shop, one stable and one barber. M. L. Ritcher was listed as the town's one photographer. Figures for 1879 and 1881 were similar, showing a slow and steady growth in both retail and manufacturing.

Cotton production in Madison, as well as other counties in the Piedmont, increased greatly during the 1870s and 1880s. In 1880, 7,358 bales were produced; by 1890 the figure had jumped to 19,300. The cotton was shipped on the Georgia Railroad or new lines of Central of Georgia, which had been established in Madison in the early 1880s.

Still, certain aspects of community life never recovered from the War. While a Gazetteer 1879 lists five schools in the town, including the Georgia Female College, the Madison Male High School, and the Forest Home Academy, few families in the post-war period could afford private education for their children. In 1881, the large brick building of the Baptist Georgia Female College burned. In 1883, the property was auctioned off. The Methodist College was never successfully revived.

Churches in Madison fared better than the schools. In fact, all of the major denominations survived the war. In 1880 six congregations were listed in the gazetteer: the original white Baptist church, the Methodists, the Presbyterians and Episcopalians; and one black Baptist church, Calvary Baptist, which had been founded in 1873. Soon this church would be joined by the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the bedrock of the slowly growing black middle class community. The AME Church was built in one of the black residential areas just west of the railroad now known as the Canaan district. All of the other church buildings were refurbished in part. The Methodist Church was subsequently rebuilt after a fire in the 1870s. The early Methodist Church (now the Episcopal Church), St. Paul AME built by E.P. Neal in 1882, and the Calvary Baptist Church, dating to the 1870s, have much in common stylistically and suggest the hands of the same builder or designer.

The Sanborn insurance map of 1885 provides the first detailed view of the town as it appeared during this period of economic recovery. Concentrating on the town center, where most of the insured properties were located, the Sanborn sheets show a town square dominated by the hip-roofed 1845 courthouse. There was a well in the southwest corner, and also a well in the middle of the street at the southeast corner. A market was located at the northern edge. The Madison Hotel, a large two-story wood building with an eight column colonnade, stretched along the eastern edge of the square. A one-story dining room was located at the rear. The rest of the east side was taken up by a public meeting hall. The north side of the square consisted of a grocery store, hardware store and barber shop. Private houses were still located on the site of the present county courthouse.

The south and west sides of the square were filled with dry goods and grocery stores, a locksmith (on the south), a furniture store and a post office. The jail was located north of the square, at the rear of the present Wellington Outlet Building. Further dry goods and hardware stores were located along West Washington and West Jefferson Streets, then simply called Bridge and Railroad Streets respectively, before the revival of the historic street names a few years later. Similarly Hancock was called Campbell Street; East Washington, Eatonton Road; First Street was Warehouse; and Second Street was Saffold. There were

several blacksmith shops and warehouses; a single bank was shown south of the square on Main Street; nearby was photographic gallery. Private residences began just north of the square and after the first block south of the square on Main Street.

The Sanborn Maps of 1890 and 1895 show few changes. The north side of a square was now dominated by a Fire House and Town Office. More banks began to fill in along the square. There was also a growing number of drug stores. Both the Georgia Railroad and Central of Georgia freight and passenger buildings show up clearly, as do a growing number of manufacturers - now insured - mostly west of the town center. Among the larger businesses were the C. F. Bishop Livery Stables, now the site of the Madison Hardware Store, the Enterprise Mills, the Gate City Oil Company and the Madison Variety Company on Second Street. A few private residences were located at the fringes of the business district, though they were slowly being replaced by commercial properties. Most black residents lived along alleys southwest of the town square, especially on Black Crook Street (now Burnett Street), north of Calvary Baptist Church, and in the area northeast of the square near the site of the present County Sheriff's office. Black neighborhoods, known as Peastown (Burney Street east of the rail) and Canaan, west of the rail, do not show up until the 20th century.

One of the most notable changes of the 1890s, as indicated in the Sanborn Maps, was the Turnell-Butler Hotel, erected prior to 1895 on the site of an old Madison Hotel, which burned in 1891. Queen Anne in style, the Turnell-Butler included an office and print shop, dining room, pool hall, Western Union office and numerous similar amenities.

Madison was, by the 1890s, a progressive and forward-looking city. Basing its new identity on commercial development, the city had recovered significantly since the war. Commerce and manufacturing were thriving, and, apparently given the amount of construction, were only slightly affected by the nationwide financial panic of 1893. Local drug stores, such as the Vason Brothers, were popular meeting places, as the fashion of soda fountains spread to Madison. There were drama societies, a bicycle club - the rage of the 1890s throughout the county - and a local amateur baseball club called the Dixies. A band sponsored by the Wray Brothers played on special occasions in the town square. Madison had two newspapers, the Advertiser and the better known Madisonian, managed by W. T. Bacon, both of them strong advocates of the New South. The Madisonian's slogan was "red hot in politics and democratic to the core."

Increasingly Madison began to invest in its future, particularly the education of its children. Following the initiation of the new state school law of 1870, Madison began to replace its private schools with new publicly financed schools. A new and impressive graded school was finally built on South Main street in 1895, around the same time as the new hotel.

Designed in Romanesque Revival style, the new School represented the most advanced facility of its type. School rooms were well-equipped and the staff carefully recruited. Again, following state laws, the school term was extended to a full six months by the time of the building's construction, and soon afterwards to nine months. A second school for "colored" children, known as the Burney Street School, was provided in the Canaan area around the same time.

Madison's growth during the 1880s and 1890s caused a relative boom in housing construction. Many of the larger lots, particularly along the main north-south corridor of Main Street, were subdivided for new construction. Also, -the properties along the old Eatonton Road (East Washington Street) and the new streets of Pine, Plum and Foster were developed. The Greek Revival fashion had long fallen out of favor by this period. By the late 1850s when the Kolb-Pue-Newton House, better known as "Boxwood", was built, the more romantic, Italianate style had begun to gain acceptance. Houses of the 1880s and 1890s, in turn, tended toward the Queen Anne style, or Vernacular Victorian, with some remaining Greek Revival or Gothic Revival influences continuing from earlier in the century. Many earlier houses also were remodeled to keep up with changing fashions, including the Atkinson Brick House on West Washington Street (Wellington Road) with its Gothic dormers of the

late 1860s, and the "Magnolias," on South Main Street, changed from a rectangular Italianate style frame house to a curvilinear and plaster-decorated Queen Anne style building in the 1880s.

Most of the newer buildings in the town, however, were distinctly vernacular in character. Overall, there was little emphasis on style other than for decorative embellishments. The most common house type was the T- or L-plan cottage, usually with a side wing and prominent, front-facing gable. This building type became a standard model for the new, often more modest housing constructed during the era. Many were decorated with components manufactured at the Madison Variety Works. Identical turned posts, balustrades, brackets, and decorative vents can be seen still throughout the town.

The early 20th-century offered every hope for Madison of continuing the prosperity of the 1880s and 1890s. Cotton prices rose steadily from 7-1/2 cents a pound in 1898 to a peak of 35 cents in 1919, as just after the First World War. Production was high; in 1910, the Agricultural Census shows Morgan's production reached 30,000 bales. By 1909, Madison would claim three commercial banks, all of which contributed to Madison's commercial growth.

The town underwent a number of improvements during this period. Roads, which had been notoriously badly maintained, were improved through new efforts by the Mayor and City Council. In 1906, the city also was granted the power by the State Legislature to build a water and sewerage system. Around the same time, the city assumed control of the old county courthouse, following construction of the new Beaux Arts style courthouse facing the northeast corner of the square in 1905.

Further civic improvements followed in the early 1920s. A newspaper article of 1920 claimed that the city was expanding with "new residences, new garages, paved streets, and other improvements galore." The main street itself, also by this period a state automobile route, was paved in 1920. And shortly afterward, the paving of ten miles of concrete road was completed between Madison and Rutledge. Instigated by the progressive Mayor T. J. Bethea, a "white way," suggestive of the Columbian Exposition of 1893 and the subsequent City Beautiful Movement, led from the depot eastward along west Jefferson Street to the square. Street lights consisting of "a dozen artistic posts ... with the necessary globes," were paid for from private subscriptions, with the hopes of leading travelers from the station to the town center.

Another major change to the town was the demolition, following a fire in 1916, of the old courthouse and the creation of a city park on the square. There was some speculation at the time that the land would be sold as commercial lots. But voices of civic responsibility prevailed, and the land became a park under city authority instead. In 1914, however, the old courthouse and its site had been sold to the federal government to be used as a site for a new post office; the old office was in rented space on the south side facing the square. For many years, however, it remained a park, and it was labeled as such in the 1921 Sanborn Map. The city's own administrative operations were shifted at this time to the old jail on High and Hancock Streets and to their 1887 combined city office building and firehall facing the square on the north side.

A number of new businesses prospered during the 1910s and 1920s. These included, reflective of Madison's new civic pride, a growing hotel trade. A second hotel called the Monroe and competing with Turnell-Butler on the square, was established at the southwest corner of First Street and West Washington Street. The Turnell-Butler also continued a brisk trade with tourists and commercial travelers. In 1909 it was renamed Madison, in 1921, the New Morgan.

Other businesses prospered during this period as well. The Thompson Wagon Works, an impressive brick manufacturing complex, was built on South Hancock Street. A number of new businesses grew up around the depot area. These included the Madison Fertilizer Company, the Godfrey Cotton Warehouse, The Penwick Warehouse Company and Georgia

Farmers Oil and Fertilizer Company. Other companies, such as Gate City Oil Company and the Madison oil company and Gin Company. Many buildings from this period remain around the depot areas as a legacy of Madison's early 20th-century prosperity.

There was some diversification of industries as well, which helped provide a firmer foundation for Madison's relative commercial success. An increasing amount of mill work was carried out in Madison, especially at the Variety Works, but also in other manufacturing companies such as the Keystone Handle Company.

One of the most striking features of life in Madison during the late 1910s and early 1920s was the impact of the automobile. The 1921 Sanborn map shows several garages and car sales show rooms. Buried fuel tanks are indicated at the southeast corner of the square for W. H. Adam's Buick Service Station. In addition there was Ben S. Thompson's Ford Garage and Service Station, Foster and Coggin's Garage on Main Street and H. K. Fitzpatrick's "Automobile Salesroom" on West Washington. Representative of the change in transportation was the building presently housing the Wellington Puritan Outlet Store on High Street. Begun as an undertaker's shop, the property shifted to carriages in the 1890s and then to auto sales, for which, apparently, the present building was constructed or at least much adapted, just prior to 1902. Further indicative of Madison's modernization, a "moving picture theater" was built on the south side of the square, adjacent to the Beaux Arts style Morgan County Bank, itself built in 1904.

Madison's prosperity would be short lived and, in fact, would abruptly end during the mid-1920s as a result of suddenly decreasing cotton prices. Like many other Georgia towns, despite some agricultural diversification, Madison remained largely dependent on cotton. High prices, in turn, helped to discourage experimentation with other crops. The first indications of a change came as early as 1920, when cotton prices dropped from a high of 35 cents to just 17 cents a pound. In the early 1920s, also, the boll weevil - described as "a cross between a termite and a tank" - had begun to have an impact on Morgan County crops. The local paper announced as early as July of 1920 that the "Boll Weevil Situation is Critical." By 1923, the results were truly disastrous. In 1919, 76,041 acres of cotton in Morgan county produced 36,197 bales of picked cotton. By 1924, cotton was down to 13,715 acres, producing only 5,712 bales. Between 1929 and 1932, prices would fall a further 60% to an all-time low of five cents a pound.

Agricultural failures were soon coupled with business failures. During the 1920s, 368 commercial banks failed in the state apparently, including, two in Madison. Numerous Madison businesses were vacated as residents were forced to move elsewhere for work. Between 1920 and 1930 the population for the city fell from 2,348 to 1,966. Many Morgan County farms were also up for sale, contributing to a loss of the rural population as well. From a high of 20,143 in 1920, the county could only claim 12,488 in the Census of 1930.

Understandably, little was built during this period. A few private homes were completed or remodeled in the early 1920s before the crisis set in. There was a similar pattern among commercial buildings. Beginning in 1931, the federal government constructed its "colonial" looking Post Office, an early example of the kind of post offices later constructed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Most commercial buildings in the town center were vacant. Many were allowed to deteriorate. The New Morgan Hotel burned in 1932 and was never rebuilt. Private houses fared little better. Maintenance was generally neglected and few improvements were made.

Increasingly, county residents came to rely on locally produced crops and on smaller gardens, as elsewhere in the country. A number of new cash crops, also, were looked upon more favorably by local farmers. Hay production for livestock increased appreciably as did the number of peach orchards and pecan groves. Many of the present mature groves in Madison date from the Depression period. Dairy production gradually supplanted cotton as the main agricultural activity. There was also an increase in eggs and broiler production. Cotton remained an important crop especially as more insect resistant strains were

introduced during the 1930s. In 1939, there were still over 22,000 acres of cotton in the county, producing 10,650 pounds of raw cotton.

The major economic change of the 1940s and 1950s was the shift from cotton and other labor-intensive crops to dairy farming, increasingly the county's main agricultural industry. The Madisonian in 1949 declared that "Dairy Incomes Rival Cotton's Profit as Morgan County Farmers Grow More Grass." Over a period of four years, ending in 1949, there had been an increase from 63 to 92 dairy farms. By 1959, dairy products would account for 41.4% of the agricultural income of the county, followed by livestock at 12.3%; poultry at 6.8%; and fruits and nuts at 5.0%. As of 1960, only 9,590 acres were still in cotton. Today there is little or no cotton grown commercially in the county.

The town's fortunes began to recover gradually during the 1950s and 1960s. In 1950, the population stood at 2,500 and there were signs of increasing economic growth. A number of older businesses had survived the hard times of the 1930s and 1940s. New businesses, such as the International Furniture Company and the Thurman Manufacturing Company were also established. The Morgan County Creamery, begun in the mid-1940s, took over the large livery stable and one-time wagon factory on South Hancock Street.

Throughout this period, Madison began to value its historic heritage. Older houses, some of which were converted to boarding houses and tourist hotels during the 1930s, were reclaimed as private homes. There was some new construction, including the new nearly 50-house subdivision called Beacon Heights begun in the early 1950s. But much attention centered on older houses, many of which were restored both by long-time residents and by newcomers to the area. A promotional pamphlet of 1953 declared that "Madison is mingling the new with the old" and that the town was hoping to retain the "culture, courtesy and charm" of its earlier period. Organizations such as the Madison Heritage Society promoted appreciation of the older buildings through walking tours and open houses.

In the past few years, Madisonians have come to appreciate just how fragile their historic town is. New development pressures, particularly at the edges of the historic core, and the construction of Interstate 20, have brought the twentieth century to Madison, with both good and bad results. In 1987, the Mayor and City Council passed a local ordinance to help protect the historic town center. The ordinance was the basis for the creation of a Historic Preservation Commission to review new construction in Madison and significant changes to historic structures. By this means, the City of Madison hopes to preserve what is best of its past and wisely plan for its future.

Physical Description**Excerpted from Raflo, Lisa. "National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form." 1989. Filed at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

General Description

The city of Madison is located at the center of Morgan County, approximately 200 miles from the coast and 63 miles east of Atlanta. The small city, comprised of a commercial center and adjacent industrial and residential areas, is at an elevation of approximately 700 feet and is situated in the Piedmont region of Georgia, an area associated with prosperous dairy farms and forest products. The city boundary is described by a circle of one mile radius centered on the town square.

The geography of Madison is primarily flat with gently sloping hills to the east and west. The plan for Madison is characterized by a grid street pattern, which extends from the town center to the southwest in the older sections of the community. Main Street, which was a major avenue in the original town layout, extends from the grid to the northeast and southwest. The later Victorian neighborhood to the east of South Main also follows the typical grid layout. Lots are laid out in rectangular shapes within blocks contained within the grid pattern. Madison's development constituted filling in much of the large grid pattern layout.

The Madison Historic District is an intact, well-preserved town characterized by a commercial district in the center with adjacent residential neighborhoods to the north and south which are dominated by antebellum architecture. To the east of the town center is a residential neighborhood characterized by later Victorian structures. The city cemetery is located in the southwest section of the city. West of the square are commercial, as well as industrial buildings, particularly along the railroad lines.

Downtown

The town center is largely comprised of late 19th century Italianate style commercial architecture, almost exclusively constructed of red brick. Within the open town square is a brick post office built in the 1930s. The quality of workmanship on many of the retail and office buildings is relatively high and incorporates decorative features such as quoins, string courses, sawtooth patterns and corbeling.

The commercial buildings around the square are set flush along the sidewalk forming a continuous facade. The majority have parapet fronts, though one building which faces the southwest corner of the square displays a gable end. The commercial buildings generally have round-headed ground floor windows and entrances. There are some cast-iron storefronts and some examples of 19th century wood-framed plate glass display windows. The 1904 Morgan County Bank & Trust building is designed in a classical motif with a pedimented porch, fluted columns, round-arched windows, and decorative keystones.

The northeast corner of the town square is dominated by an impressive brick and limestone county courthouse built in 1905. The Morgan County Courthouse is an excellent example of the elaborate Beaux Arts style. Designed by J. S. Golucke and Company and built by the Winder Lumber Company, the courthouse is distinguished by a pronounced, enriched entablature, limestone lintels, sills and string courses, giant order Corinthian or Composite columns and a large, domed cupola.

The c. 1895 jail built next to the courthouse has a number of Romanesque details and features quarry-faced granite lintels and sills, a granite water table, stringcourses, and a tower capped by a pyramidal slate roof.

The 1931 post office, located in the town square, and the 1939 city hall built near the square are late examples of the popular turn-of-the-century Colonial Revival style. The style is identified by use of paired windows, keystones, lintels, cupolas, and classical columns. Also within the commercial area is the former Ben S. Thompson Ford Company, an Art Deco style influenced building. Located on South Main Street, the brick building features industrial sash windows, a stepped cornice, and a stucco facade.

Residential Neighborhoods

In the residential sections the lot size increases. Those along Main Street are typically one-half block deep with frontage on the street varying between 701 to 2001. Several lot sizes within the antebellum section are an entire block deep and one-half a block wide. Lots in the more contemporary neighborhood to the east of Main Street are typically 1001 by 1501.

Residential areas are found throughout the historic district. Antebellum homes are located along North and South Main Street, Dixie Avenue, Academy Street, and old Post Road. A Victorian neighborhood is located east of the main square and a black neighborhood to the northwest. St. Paul AME Church is located within the historic black neighborhood of Canaan. There is also development along the edges of the district including farmstead properties. The historic development along the major thoroughfares begins to dwindle as later development infringes.

The residential appearance of the city can best be described by its range of architectural styles. Madison's early architecture is reflective of most Piedmont architecture in that the dates and style adaptations are several decades removed from architectural fashion in more urbanized coastal areas. Features from the Georgian style include central halls, enriched entablatures, pediments, and pilasters. The Federal style is represented with simple transoms & sidelights, somewhat attenuated classically inspired features and relatively flat and stylized decorative elements.

The Greek Revival style used in residential design varies from simple cottages to high-style designs. Modest houses typically feature pyramidal roofs, recessed porches supported by round or square columns and doorways with a transom and sidelights. More elaborate two-story, high-style examples of the symmetrical design include wide cornice lines emphasized with a band of trim, fluted Doric columns and elaborate doorways with transoms and sidelights. The largest concentration of this style is along Main and Academy Streets and old Post Road. In addition, a number of earlier Georgian and Federal style buildings received Greek Revival elements during the 1840-1860 period.

The Gothic Revival style buildings dating from the 1850s are largely adaptations of earlier, generally Greek Revival structures. The style appears to have been introduced to Madison just before and after the Civil War and is revealed primarily through prominent, steeply pitched wall dormers added to otherwise classical type buildings. A number of houses have Gothic Revival porches, usually with decorative brackets and octagonal or chamfered posts. In a more general sense, Gothic Revival details, including decorative brackets, bargeboards, etc., are more or less continuously used on later Victorian houses.

Italianate influences began to be seen in Madison around the same time as Gothic. Similarly, the Italianate style would influence Madison buildings until the beginning of the 20th century. Some of the notable Italianate influence include projecting cornices, round-headed windows, bracketed eaves and decorative porches. Another major category of Italianate buildings is found in the commercial core and warehouse sections of the city. The Italianate character is exhibited most strongly in the use of round-headed windows, some

have parapet fronts, recessed panels and simplified cornices.

Many Madison buildings of the 1880s and 1890s were combinations of Victorian styles. These influences can be traced from Gothic Revival and Italianate to Second Empire, Eastlake and Queen Anne. A large number of houses built after 1880 are representative of the Queen Anne style. The Hunter House c. 1890 illustrates this style by its multigabled, decorative embellishments, corbelled chimneys and asymmetrical plan.

There are also a large number of one- and two-story houses, that are considered Vernacular Victorian in style. Identifying features include a pyramidal-roof, decorative gables, and often projecting front and side gables which create either a T- or L-shaped plan. Particularly noticeable are the decorative porches, vents and bargeboards. Many homes are finished with turned and sawn wood details, provided by the local Madison Variety Works. Examples of this style are found throughout the city, particularly along East Washington Street, Pine Street, and lower N. Second Street.

Early twentieth century domestic architecture in Madison is characterized by a relatively large number of Craftsman style buildings and alterations to existing buildings. Identifying elements of this style are shingle walls, square and Elephantine columns on piers, wide overhanging eaves, 9/1 paned windows, and low-pitched roofs.

The district also contains a few examples of the Tudor style. A former Victorian residence along South Main adapted the Tudor style in the early 1920s. Identifying elements include half timbering, a wide entry porch, a clay barrel tile roof, casement windows, and overhanging eaves.

There are a number of folk type houses throughout the district. These types include one-story, central hall plans and the traditional hall-and-parlor plans. There are also a large number of side-gabled workers' housing units, a number of double-pen and single room tenements, and at least one shotgun house. The heaviest concentrations exist on S. Fourth Street, along Burney Street, on East Jefferson Street. *[Those along Burney Street have been demolished.]*

The areas of the district associated with the black community tend to be densely settled and consist of small vernacular houses with narrow frontages. This is particularly true along S. Fourth St. at the intersection of Hill St. and along W. Burney St. west of the railroad track. Two other remaining historic black residential enclaves include a series of buildings just west of Main Street, just off of Burney Street. *[These have been demolished.]*

Other smaller residences, many once occupied by servants and laborers, are scattered throughout the town, especially at the south end along secondary streets. Other tenant residences are located on residential lots usually behind larger houses.

Institutional Buildings

Religious buildings within the district are primarily masonry buildings. The original Baptist Church, now the Clark's Chapel Baptist Church, is the only frame religious structure. This simple rectangular structure with a gabled roof and small corner tower is now sheathed in asbestos shingles. Greek Revival style churches include the Baptist and Presbyterian churches. The original Methodist church, now used by the Episcopal congregation, contains Gothic inspired detailing. St. Paul AME church features Romanesque-inspired designs in brick. The Methodist Church also along South Main is designed in a Neoclassical style of architecture and includes use of Corinthian columns on pedestals, a full temple-front entablature and a central pediment.

The 1895 Madison Graded School is located within the residential neighborhood along

South Main Street. Designed by the architectural firm of Tinsley and Wilson of Lynchburg, Virginia, it represents an outstanding example of a more conventional Romanesque Revival style. The large brick building is characterized by terra-cotta and cast-stone ornamentation, a three-story belfry created by brick arches, round arched entrances and windows, quarry-faced granite lintels and sills, a rough finished water table and string courses. The school building now serves as the Madison-Morgan Cultural Center. Behind the center stands a two-story, functionally designed brick gym which was built in 1940 through the WPA program. *[Since altered.]*

Railroad and Industrial Areas

The railroad section within the district contains a brick antebellum depot used by the Georgia Railroad on one side of a wide expanse of tracks. The former Georgia Railroad passenger terminal is an early example of the Italianate style and dates to the early 1840s. The first train from Madison to Marthasville (Atlanta) ran on September 15, 1845. A late 19th century, metal-clad depot formerly operated by the Central of Georgia is located across the tracks from the Georgia Railroad depot.

Many of the commercial warehouses, stables, and other buildings of the late 19th century are functional in design and construction. The L.M. Thompson Wagon Works on the corner of E. Washington and S. Hancock Street is an example of a warehouse type structure built between 1901 and 1909. The two-story building is of brick construction which now features an altered front facade. *[Façade has had a sympathetic rehabilitation]* The Hancock Street facade displays a continuous row of segmental arched windows and doorways that allowed carriage access. The Madison Fertilizer Company was built on W. Jefferson St. across from the Georgia Railroad depot between 1909 and 1921. This two-story brick structure also featured segmental arched windows.

Industrial buildings include a variety of warehouses, primarily located in the railroad section of the community. These structures feature brick construction in rectangular forms with modest details. The former Godfrey Cotton Warehouse is setback from Jefferson Street behind the depot and has had several additions made to its original form. The one surviving industrial complex is the Georgia Farmers Cotton Oil and Fertilizer Company located at the extreme southwest edge of the district. This complex contains a collection of one- and two-story brick buildings.

Building Materials and Construction Techniques

Madison is dominated by historic wood frame buildings, generally covered in lapped weatherboard siding. There are a few buildings with heavy timber frames and apparently some remnants of log structures, generally incorporated within later buildings. Most nineteenth century buildings have transitional framing systems, whereas after 1880, balloon frame construction began to predominate as elsewhere in the country. The building materials used are largely southern pine with possibly some oak and other hardwoods used for framing members. Siding and framing are nearly all machine produced. The wood siding is usually painted, except in cases where the buildings have been neglected.

There are some examples of decorative ironwork in the city and some cast and wrought-iron fences. There are a few cast-iron rails, but little over-all use of cast-iron on domestic buildings.

Foundations for commercial buildings are generally continuous and even with the grade. Houses, however, are generally raised, at least from two to four feet, and are built on

brick piers, though some early continuous foundations are also found. Some foundations have been historically infilled with brick or brick lattice. Most, however, now have concrete block or stucco infill. Some remaining wood foundation panels can be seen on some of the more modest buildings.

Windows on houses are generally multi-paned in early nineteenth century examples, and have few panes in late nineteenth and twentieth century examples. A few, early nineteenth century houses have original 9/9 patterned windows. Greek Revival houses generally have 6/6 patterned sashes. The Craftsman/Bungalow style windows are commonly 9/1 patterned sashes. Commercial buildings have both plate glass windows and multi-light windows. There are some examples of mid-twentieth century industrial steel sash and some more modern (post-1920) display windows. Many houses also have historic shutters, though a surprising number of houses have modern, not always appropriate replacement shutters.

Landscaping and Outbuildings

Madison possesses a large number of historic secondary buildings, generally of frame construction. These include historic sheds, garages, green houses, servants and tenants dwellings, well-houses and smokehouses. These relatively modest buildings are generally located at the rear of residential lots. One property, Boxwood, has an impressive set of tenant dwellings and barns.

There are a large number of street trees throughout the town. Most of the large canopy trees are oaks, though there are maples and a few remaining elm. The town square also has cedar and pine trees. Most of the larger street trees are concentrated along upper and lower Main Street and particularly along Academy Street, Old Post Road, and Dixie Avenue. In addition to canopy trees, there are numerous smaller, mostly understory trees such as dogwood and crepe myrtle. In addition to street trees, there are a number of remaining pecan orchards. In fact, this is one of the most striking features of the residential area and something that adds to the town's rural flavor.

Many houses are ornamented with shrubs and there are remnants of two significant geometrical boxwood gardens. Formal hedges are generally boxwood or euonymus. Foundation plantings range from more traditional nandina, privet and acuba to more recent plantings of hollies, azaleas and japonica.

Lawns are generally covered with standard southern grasses, fescue, bermuda or centipede. There are some remaining swept yards in predominantly black areas. *[Not observed in the most recent survey]* At least one garden, on S. Second Street is considered a typical black folk garden which includes swept paths, a prominent perimeter hedge and bedded ornamental plants with decorative borders. *[Not observed in the most recent survey]*

Madison's Historic District also features a large number of white painted picket fences. These follow a variety of patterns, though narrow balustraded examples, typical of the Greek Revival period, are the most common. A number of these are historic or at least are replacements of historic examples. There are also examples of historic plank, and wire fences, both with stone and wood posts. Street signs are marked by stone, concrete, and wood posts placed at the corners of intersecting streets.

The Madison Cemetery is located in the southwest section of the city. Representing the largest open public landscaped area within the district, the cemetery is an example of a typical mid-19th century design which created a park-like atmosphere. The grounds contain large shade trees, cedars, holly, oak, wrought iron fences, sculptured monuments and obelisks. There is also a section honoring Madison's Civil War soldiers.

Madison also includes several monuments. The Braswell Monument dates from the

mid-19th century and is an obelisk located within the town square. The Confederate monument of a soldier is located in Hill Park and a World War I veterans monument, also of a soldier, is in front of the county courthouse. Both of these statues date from the early 20th century. A stagecoach route marker, is located along Dixie Avenue. The marker was erected in 1931 and indicates the location of a former tavern along this route.

Noncontributing Properties

Noncontributing properties in the district include a few scattered non-historic or extensively altered houses and post-1945 commercial, industrial and institutional buildings that could not be drawn out of the boundaries. Examples of buildings considered noncontributing were fast food restaurants, convenience stores, strip-type shopping centers, laundromats, and grocery stores. A large percentage of these buildings are located north and west of the town square.

Noncontributing industrial buildings are found near the rail depots.

Summary

The Madison Historic District is an excellent example of an intact historic district spanning over a century of architectural development. The district illustrates the wide variety of types and styles of buildings used as well as the various lifestyles of its citizens and is reflective of small town life in Georgia beginning from the early 19th century. The historic area is largely intact and well preserved. Some of the residential dwellings, particularly along Main Street are now used for commercial purposes.

Statement of significance (by area) **Excerpted from Raflo, Lisa. "National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form." 1989. Filed at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

The Madison Historic District is significant as a 19th century and early 20th century residential, commercial and industrial district that provides an excellent example of the type of prosperous community particular found throughout the southern cotton belt.

Architecture

The Madison Historic District is significant in architecture for its fine collection of architectural styles and building types found in its residential, commercial, industrial, religious, and public structures. Styles represented within the district illustrate the evolution of architecture in Georgia from the early primitive plain types of buildings to the elaborate manifestations of the Victorian era and extend into the more modest designs of the early 20th century. These buildings also represent all segments of the community's population and all phases of the community's life. The residential architecture includes homes of the wealthiest citizens as well as modest tenant cottages. Building types illustrate the home life, and business and religious activities, of Madison's citizens and the role of the public institutions in the community. The district is also important for its representation of the evolution of architectural styles. The district is comprised of a commercial section, various residential areas and a small warehouse/industrial section. The commercial section is significant because of its examples of turn-of-the-century, Italianate architecture. Many of the one-to three-story facades feature arched windows, brick corbeling and decorative cornice lines. Some exhibit cast-iron storefronts and there are examples of 19th century wood framed, plate glass windows. The most impressive public building located in the northeast corner of the square is the 1905 Beaux Arts style Morgan County Courthouse. This brick and stone structure is designed with a pedimented central pavilion with Corinthian columns, topped by a domed cupola. The building also features an elaborate detailed cornice, keystones, brick pilasters and fanlight windows. The historic residential areas provide an impressive range of architectural styles. Madison retains a significant number of antebellum buildings, most notably examples from the Greek Revival period. The Greek Revival style is found in residences and religious buildings and varies from modest cottages to elaborate high style examples. Identifying elements include the symmetrical plan, wide cornice lines emphasized with a band of trim, entry porches supported by round or square columns, transom and sidelight surrounds. One of the most notable antebellum buildings that had various style changes is Boxwood built in 1851. This three-story frame structure was built with two facades--one early Victorian and the other temple form-- because it faced onto more than one street. Twin boxwood gardens preface both of these facades. The main house is basically a four room central hall plan with a side addition of an original pantry, bathroom, and kitchen. Boxwood retains its original parlor furnishings, all of its ruby and cobalt engraved transom and sidelights on both facades and its original plaster. The Gothic Revival style appears to have been introduced to the area before and after the Civil War. Some of the buildings are adaptations of earlier Greek Revival buildings. The architectural detailing used includes steeply pitched dormer windows, decorative brackets and bargeboards. Italianate was also a popular style and influence Madison's building styles until the beginning of the 20th century. Some of these influences include projecting cornices, round-headed windows, bracketed eaves and decorative porches. The Georgia Railroad passenger terminal is an early example of this style dating from the early 1840s. Many Madison buildings are excellent examples from the Victorian period illustrating details from the Second Empire, Eastlake, Queen Anne and Romanesque architectural styles. Some of these

buildings incorporate combinations of several Victorian styles and include steep pediments, decorative embellishments, corbelled chimneys and asymmetrical layouts. The district also includes a variety of one-and two-story vernacular Victorian houses with projecting front and side gables and either a T- or L-shaped plan. These buildings exhibit modest Victorian detailing. The district has a significant number of Neoclassical buildings which emphasize classical motifs, temple-front entablatures, central pediments and columns. Examples of the Colonial Revival can be seen in Madison's public buildings, the post office and city hall. The brick industrial and warehouse buildings within the historic district are functionally designed. The Central of Georgia depot represents an early use of metal-siding. The churches within Madison also represent a wide range of architectural styles. From the early 1833 frame structure of the Clark's Chapel Baptist Church to examples of Gothic, Greek Revival and Neoclassical styles. The district also contains examples of various folk types of architecture. Representing the range of lifestyles through the town's history, examples of single pen, double pen as well as former slave cottages are shown. Generally residential structures were either wood frame or brick. Commercial and industrial buildings were mostly brick. Madison's building stock also represents examples of prevailing building technology through the 19th and into the 20th century. Early buildings were of heavy timber frame construction while late forms included balloon frame and brick load bearing wall construction. This intact historic district is an excellent example of the evolution of architecture in small Georgia cities from the early 19th century to the early 20th century.

Community Planning and Development

In terms of community planning and development the district is significant as an early Piedmont planned town which includes a grid layout with wide major avenues and a public square. In the tradition of planned towns in Georgia, this plan, known as the Washington-type plan, has also served as a model for other Georgia communities. The plan is characterized by a central square with principal streets entering at right angles at the corners. The grid pattern established a focal point for the town square which literally and figuratively became the center of Madison. Extensions of this grid served for residential development. This development evolved into an elongated north/south grid variation due to the area's sloping topography to the east and the location of the rail lines to the west. Madison is important in community planning in that the existing town layout illustrates how the earlier grid pattern has been expanded and infilled as the community developed. Later streets are oriented at angles from the original plan and block divisions contrast with the lot arrangements found in the original sections of the city. The town also contains interesting settlement patterns. A typical pattern is the dense development at the corner of Burney Street and North Second Street which contains a historic black settlement. The orientation of the houses creates an isolated community within the larger city. Another typical pattern are the tenant houses arranged in rows along the alleys found in several locations at the edges of the community. The district is also significant for its pattern of development from large land lots to smaller subdivided lots typical of development in Georgia cities. The railroad development is associated with the mid to late 19th century industrial and agricultural development of Madison. This perimeter rail pattern is typical of early planned towns which later established rail connections. The entire district provides a good perspective of a developing community beginning from the early 19th century.

Commerce

The City of Madison is important as the center of commerce for the community and

the surrounding rural countryside. Historically the city functioned as the service center and agricultural market for the surrounding rural area. The community's retail and service businesses provided goods for this population. The railroad connection and existence of several cotton-related industries provided market outlets for the farm production. The majority of buildings housed a variety of stores, offices, and other places of business that provided day-to-day commercial activities including retailing, banking, and transportation for the residents of Madison. The commercial significance is also represented by the historic buildings concentrated downtown, around the town square and along the railroads. Professional services were also provided for the city since it serves as the county seat of Morgan County. The city's commercial establishments continue to be retail and service oriented and have filled the needs of the community for over 130 years.

Ethnic Heritage/Black History

The Madison Historic District is significant in ethnic heritage for its examples of black heritage within the community. At least two enclaves of small, one-story, framed buildings are found within the district and represent the pattern of development in black neighborhoods. *[Both areas have witnessed nearly complete demolition]* Within these small communities were also churches, schools, and businesses which served the needs of the black residents. This type of dense enclave found within a larger historic district is an aspect of a community's heritage which is often disappearing because of modern day urban renewal. Aspects of ethnic heritage can also be found in the remaining outbuildings and domestic servant houses located behind many of the district's larger antebellum residences. Also significant to black history are the three historic black churches--St. Paul AME, Clarke Chapel Baptist Church, and Calvary Baptist. These churches are community landmarks that not only served the religious needs of the area but also served as important social and educational facilities. This multipurpose role of the church was cited in Historic Black Resources by Carole Merritt, a handbook which identifies and evaluates historic African-American properties in Georgia. The location, design, and pattern of development of all these resources provides a perspective on the lifestyles of blacks during the 19th and early 20th century.

Landscape Architecture

The Madison Historic District is significant in terms of landscape architecture, due to its significant open and landscaped spaces and the overall landscape character that defines the district. The town square is one of the community's most valuable assets. The open square containing the post office provides relief in the densely developed town center. It is also an important historic space in Madison and is a good example of a downtown square found in many planned Georgia towns. Private spaces also of importance include the remains of two former period gardens at Bonar Hall and Boxwood. The landscape elements of street trees, such as pecan, oak, dogwood, and magnolia, foundation shrubs, such as boxwood, euonymus, azalea, and grassed lawns assist in defining the historic district. These elements form an overlay over the concentration of historic buildings and create the pleasant, shady environment of soft green hues that extends throughout the district. The matured street trees also significant as a manifestation of a late 19th century landscaping movement in Georgia towns. The district retains examples of decorative wrought-iron and wooden picket fences and there are examples of historic plank and wire fences both with stone and wood posts. Street signs are marked by stone, concrete or wood posts placed at the corners of intersecting streets. The city cemetery is significant as it represents the largest open public

landscaped area within the district. The district also contains Hill Park, an early 20th century recreational pool and picnic area. The district includes various historic monuments--war memorials and a stage coach marker--and historic pecan groves which contribute to the overall landscape design.

Politics and Government

Madison is significant in politics and government as the county seat of Morgan County. The establishment of the county in 1807 called for the creation of a county seat and provided that the sale of lots be used for the construction of a courthouse and jail. Since its incorporation in 1809, Madison has provided a central location for the county's government. The government of the county is reflected in its historic jail and elaborate courthouse. The district is also significant for its four important public buildings--the post office, the city hall, the county courthouse and the county jail--which represent the presence of federal and local government in Madison during the late 19th and early 20th century. The city hall, post office, and gym are three of the few major buildings built in Madison during 1931-1940 and, as such, reflect the economic stimulation that the WPA and other federal programs were designed to provide during the Depression. These buildings represent three different levels of government and their day-to-day operations in the community. The design used for the post office is typical of post offices built throughout the United States during this period and is based on standardized plans. Although it was typical for all levels of government to be represented in buildings around town squares it is relatively unusual for so many of these buildings to have survived in one town.

Transportation

The district is significant in transportation since it has served as a center for several modes of travel. The district contains a portion of an early stagecoach route which extended from Charleston to New Orleans. Although the actual route is not evident in the present landscaping, the stone marker along Dixie Avenue indicates the place where a former tavern once stood which serviced travelers along this route. Madison was used as a rest stop for passengers and a chance to obtain fresh horses. At this time the town was considered the wealthiest and most aristocratic village along the route. The railroad lines and the two historic depots also contribute to the district's significance. The 1840s depot is one of the few intact antebellum railroad depots in the state, and helps to document the character and appearance of the state's earliest rail transportation facilities. The railroad represent the role that the Georgia Railroad played in the historical development of Madison and its central business district as a major trading center. The completion of the Georgia Railroad to the community in 1841 created an important transportation link that connected the community with the Carolina coast. Following the extension of the Georgia Railroad to Atlanta by 1845 access to the developing western sections of the United States were possible. The community was also part of another rail line the Central of Georgia, which was completed to the community in the early 1880s. The 1920s began the establishment of service enterprises for the automobile, such as the automobile sales operations, garages,, service stations and the state highway connection. These services were apparently a local impetus for the paving of roads in the community in 1920. The city also contains portions of Dixie Highway which is called Dixie Avenue within Madison's city limits.

Archaeological Potential

Because of the district's age and pattern of development the potential is high for significant archaeological findings. At least two private investigations have been conducted at the former Martin L. Richter House at 201 South Main Street and at the site of the Georgia Female College behind the Thomason-Miller House at 498 South Main Street. Both of these investigations have yielded information of potential archaeological findings. However, we were unable to fully access the archaeological potential of the entire district at this time.

Boundary Justification

The presently proposed district maintains essentially the same boundaries as the original Madison Local Historic District. It is therefore appropriate to restate the boundary justification for the original local historic district (Chapman, 1988):

The boundaries of the Madison Historic District were established in such a way as to incorporate the majority of the known historic buildings associated with the city's development. The outermost boundary was determined in part by the existing city limits. As a result, historic developments at the south end, including substantial Old Oil Mill, were necessarily excluded as outside the Commission's jurisdiction. Other boundaries were determined by relative concentrations of historic buildings.

The northern boundary marks a point of a substantial reduction in the number of historic buildings and increased new development. Historic buildings beyond that point have much contextual integrity and are absorbed into the small commercial strip at that end of town. The southeast boundary, at the other end of Main Street, again is based on the concentration of historic buildings and coincides approximately – with only a few exceptions – with the city limits. The eastern edge of the district encompasses a certain amount of underdeveloped land contiguous with and visually related to the core of the historic district. Lots along Poplar, Plum, and Foster Street have all been included due to the fact that they were laid out in a historic period and do include a number of historic buildings. This is one area in which the boundary differs significantly from the National Register boundaries.

Newer residential areas at the northeast have been excluded, particularly Belmont and Harris Streets, largely because of the later development and the fact that the newer subdivisions have little visual impact on the historic district. However, a section of North Hancock Street (East Avenue) and Park Street has been included, despite the relatively large number of non-historic buildings, because of the area's proximity of the town center and its close visual relationship to the square and lower North Main Street. This is a second of the few areas where the local boundary differs substantially from the National Register District boundary.

At the west side of the district, the boundary is based in part on the Central of Georgia (later the Seaboard) Railroad Line, with exceptions where major concentrations of historic buildings occur on the other side (west side) of the line. At the northwest edge, the boundary incorporates St. Paul's AME Church, an important site associated with black history in Madison and, to the south of this, the Burney Street and Hough Court area, traditionally known as Canaan. There are a number of "intrusions" and "non-historic" buildings in this area. But the overall historic significance of the area, particularly to the still residential black community and the remaining historic buildings, help to justify inclusion. South of this, the district extends to include number of historic buildings along Wellington Road, including the well-known c. 1840 Atkinson Brick House, and several other modest cottages (especially on Bull Street) and on West Jefferson Street. A number of "intrusions," including two trailer courts, are included within this area, but inclusion of other important buildings was seen to warrant this choice. Similarly, the large industrial and commercial center extending into the district, and excluded from the National Register District, was included for

practical, regulatory reasons. This area also is seen as having a critical visual impact upon the core of the historic line, crossing over to include the extension of Madison's historic cemetery and several historic houses located just over the tracks along the extension of several streets.

Chapman's argument hold true for the boundaries which do not vary from the original district boundaries.

A recent resurvey of the district (October 1998; Kocher, 1999) revealed several areas that warrant adjustment of the original boundaries. As mentioned in the first paragraph of Chapman's boundary justification, there are several resources, including a portion of the Bonner Hall property and the Old Oil Mill, which were excluded because they were beyond the city limits. This area has since been annexed to the city affording the opportunity to extend the district boundary to provide protection to these important properties. This extension will incorporate nearly ten (10) properties.

Chapman next discusses the northern boundary of the district which excludes a number of vernacular houses dating to the earlier twentieth century. These were excluded from the original district because of a "lost of contextual integrity" due to commercial strip development. An examination of this area revealed that, though intrusive development has occurred on the west side of North Main and on both sides of North Main beyond the city limits, a cluster of houses on the east side of North Main Street retain a high degree of contextual integrity. These structures are indicative of the scattered development which occurred at the fringe of towns during the New South Era. The boundary has been extended to include these properties adding approximately fifteen (15) resources.

At the southern end of Main Street two properties will be added to the district. By adding these two structures, one contributing and one non-contributing, the boundary of the historic district will become contiguous with the commercial area regulated by the Corridor Design Commission (CDC).

Chapman's discussion of the inclusion of the properties along Poplar, Plum, and Foster Streets remains valid even more so as many structure have since attained the age of fifty years. However, the original boundary extended to Maxey's Lane to include a small farmstead. This farmstead has since been lost leaving little justification to include this area. The rural character of this area is worthy of preservation, but should be done through other management tools such as open space zoning or subdivision regulation. This reduction will also remove several non-historic houses on adjacent properties.

Another reduction of the boundary occurs in the Park Street/East Avenues area. The southernmost lots on Belmont Street, the corners of Park Street, are clearly part of the non-historic subdivision along this street. One of these lots contains a ranch house which is the same age and visual character as the other houses on Belmont. The other lot is vacant. These lots have been removed from the district. Also removed the last lot in the district on the south side of East Avenue. This property contains a non-historic apartment complex which is not visually consistent with the rest of the district.

The final alteration to the boundary relates to the neighborhood traditionally known as Canaan and adjacent areas. The recent survey of the district revealed this to be the area which experienced the greatest change since the original district designation. Some of the change is positive. One of trailer parks on West Jefferson has been removed greatly reducing the number of intrusion in this section. Unfortunately, negative change has also occurred. A substantial number of historic properties have be demolished on Hough Court (now Circle), and new construction in this area lowers the number of contributing properties. These changes call for an adjustment of the district boundaries.

One option would be to reduce the district through the exclusion of the Hough Circle

area and adjusting the boundary to encompass only those resources lining the railroad and Fifth Avenue. The Madison Historic Preservation Commission, however, felt that this move would further jeopardize the remaining historic structures in this area. Therefore the commission has chosen the alternative option, which is to expand rather than reduce the district in this area. There are numerous historic resources along Pearl Street and Whitehall Street which were left out of the original district. The currently proposed district boundary includes these streets and their properties. Approximately fifty (50) properties would be added to the district. This raises the ratio of contributing to noncontributing properties in this area and cements Madison's commitment to all types of architecture - vernacular and high style - in the city.

The Madison Historic District is widely recognized as one of the most intact concentrations of historic architecture in the state. The original historic district was very successful in the protection of these resources. The proposed historic district seeks to continue this protection. Therefore, the proposed boundaries maintain the original district aside from minor adjustments which reflect the changes which have occurred in the intervening years.

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