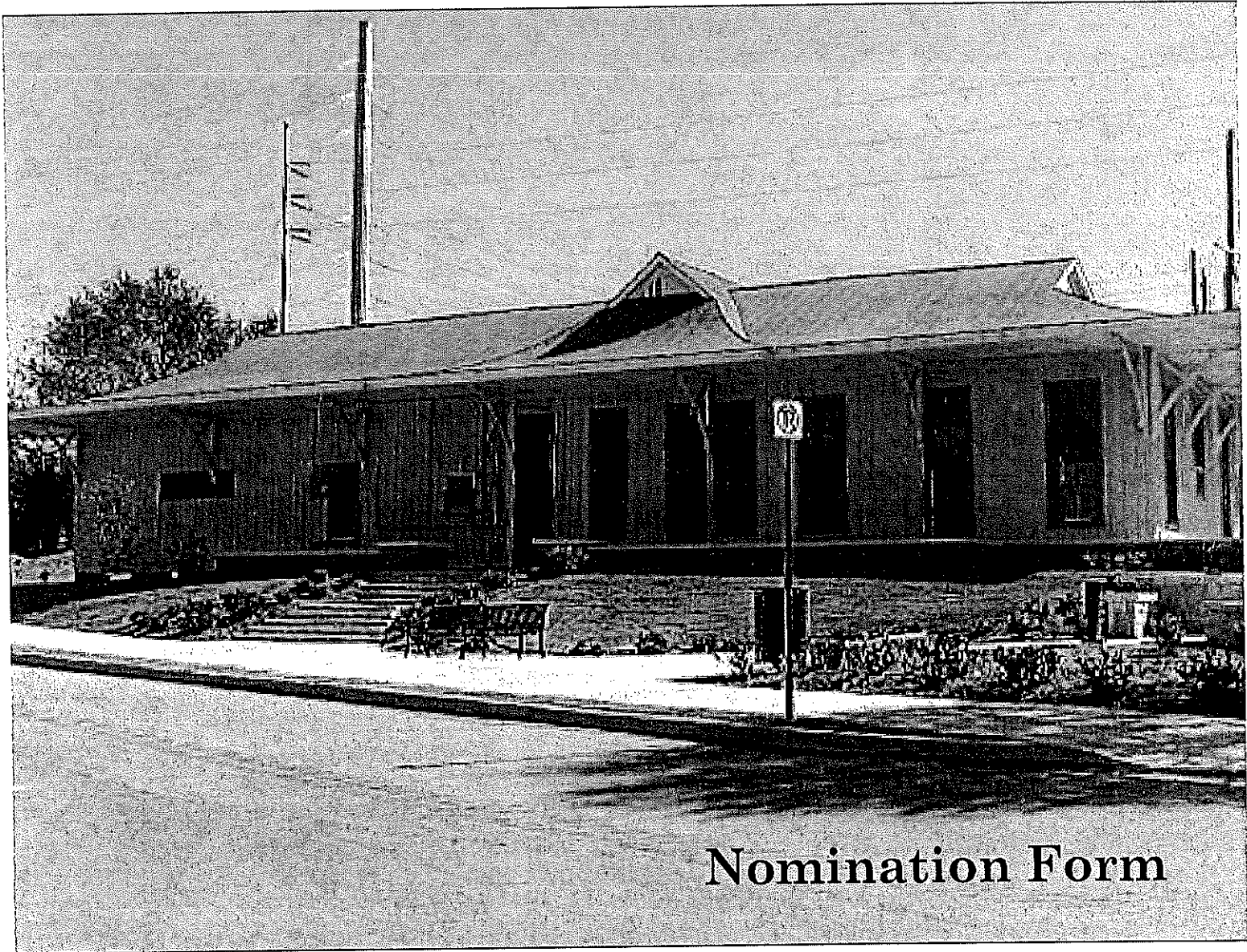
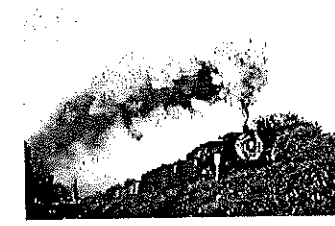
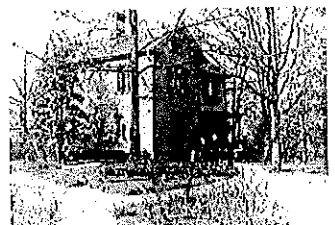
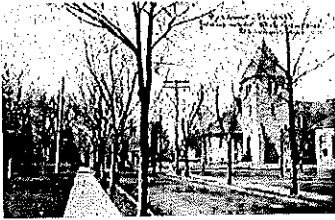


# Old Decatur Historic District



**Nomination Form**

February 5, 2006



# Table of Contents

**Nomination Form .....Error! Bookmark not defined.**

**District Detail.....Error! Bookmark not defined.**

    Proposed Name of District.....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

    Description & Narrative.....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

    History.....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

    Symbols ..... 4

    ..... 5

**Maps & Photographs .....5**

    Map ..... 5

    Floating Graphics ..... 7

    Map ..... 5

    Map ..... 5

    Map ..... 5

**Document Structure.....7**

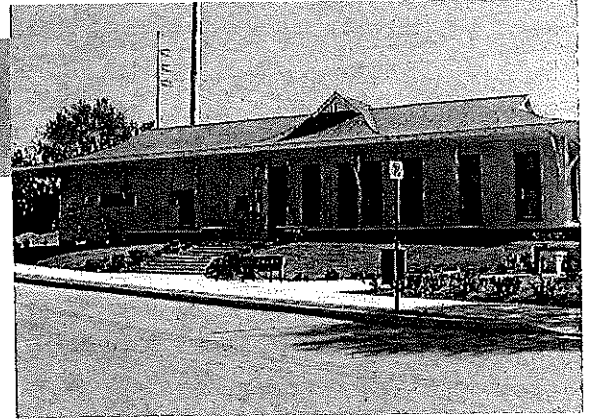
    Page Breaks and Section Breaks ..... 8

    Headers and Footers ..... 10

    Cover Page..... 21

    Table of Contents ..... 21

**This Template ..... 21**



# Decatur Historic District Nomination Form

## Short Name of District

Old Decatur Historic District

## Location

*Describe in general terms the location of the district within the City*

The proposed historic district is bounded by Sycamore Street & East Ponce de Leon Avenue to the north; by Sycamore Place and the MARTA Property to the east; by East Howard Avenue and the Old Train Depot to the south; and North Candler Street & Church Street to the west. See the attached map for proposed boundaries.

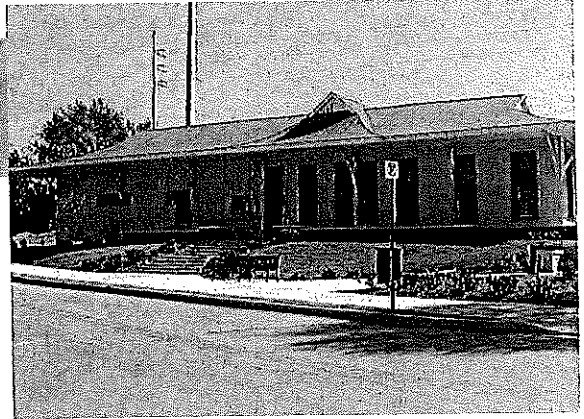
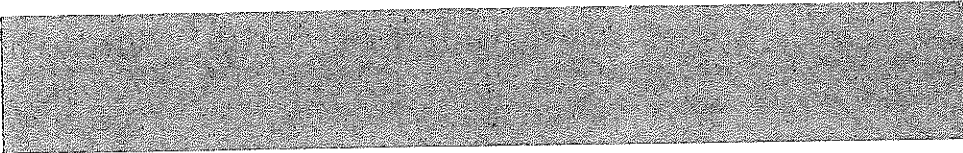
*List principal streets and features within and around the district*

In addition to the above-mentioned streets, the district also includes Barry Street and Pate Street. The district includes the original and oldest residential area in the City of Decatur. Among the properties within the district is Decatur's oldest structure, the High House (c. 1830); The largest and nicest Victorian home; the "Old School House" property which is listed on the National Trust for Historic Preservation; as well as an example of almost every residential style of architecture built throughout Decatur's history. The home at 220 North Candler Street is owned by Clark Candler, descendant of one of Decatur's most prominent families throughout its history. The proposed district also contains numerous large historic trees and collectively represents

## Reasons for Requesting Historic District Status

*Check all that apply and explain*

- Recognition
- Protection – The entire neighborhood is under extreme redevelopment pressure and the entire proposed district is in danger of losing important historic structures and its overall character.



- Tax Incentives
- Grant Assistance
- Other

### **Nomination Prepared By:**

*Name:*

Mary J. Karwoski, Chairman  
Jay Beard  
LeeBeth Burge

*Title and Organization, if any:*

Old Decatur Neighborhood Association

*Mailing Address:*

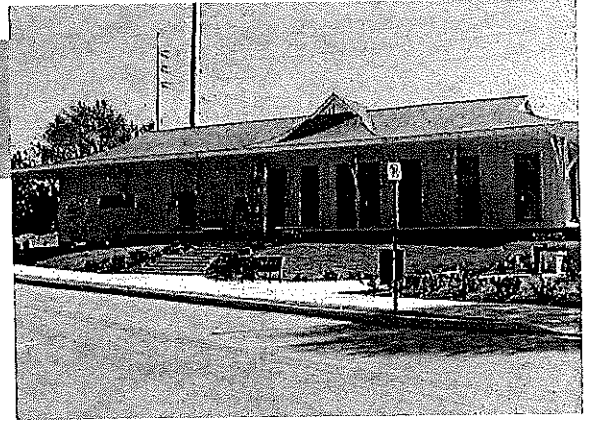
119 Barry Street  
Decatur, GA 30030

*Please explain your relationship to or interest in the district:*

We are all concerned citizens of the proposed local historic district.

Signature:

Date:



## Old Decatur

### Description of Proposed District

The area comprising the Old Decatur Historic District – Sycamore Street, Hillyer Place, Sycamore Place, Barry Street, Pate Street, and North Candler Street -- is the oldest residential section in the City. The portions of the streets still retain their original character. Most of the homes date from the later part of the nineteenth or early part of the twentieth century. A large portion of the proposed district lies within the original city limits of Decatur – Line Street (now Hillyer Place).

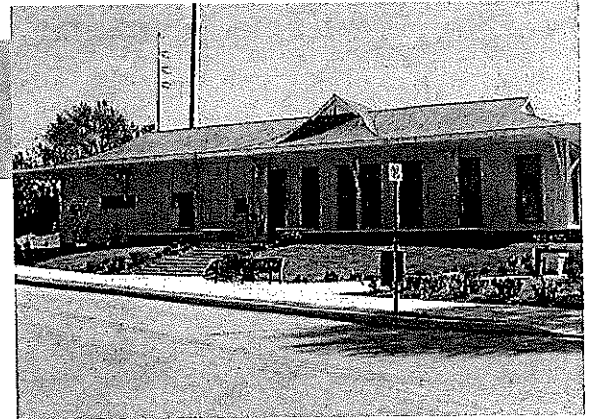
### ■ Narrative Description

As excerpted from the “Decatur Historic Preservation Resource Manual,” September 1992, Darlene Roth, Ph.D., et al.

“The Northeast section of Decatur also contains the oldest residential area in town, which lies along Sycamore Street, Hillyer Place, Sycamore Place, Barry Street, Pate Street, and North Candler Street. These streets still retain some nineteenth century character, since some of the homes date from the late decades of the nineteenth century. Many of the homes are high style varieties with much detailing, many ornate feature, and pure stylistic components. along Sycamore Street especially, there are many Queen Anne houses which both highly styled and vernacular in their expression. There are also Decorated Victorians, Gabled Ells, a Double Pen house, Craftsman Bungalows, American Foursquares, and a late Neoclassical Revival.

On Pate Street (119) there is Decatur’s only example of a single pen house, and on North Candler, is an example of a Gabled Ell which may have derived from an original Hall –and- Parlor house. ...

Sycamore Street itself is one of the oldest east-west routes through the city, dating back, according to local testimony, to a trade route of the Creek Indians which ran from Augusta to Stone Mountain to Sandtown, an Indian trading village on the Chattahoochee. Along this thoroughfare stagecoaches later ran, when Decatur became the county seat of newly formed DeKalb County in 1822. Some of Decatur’s first homes were built along this road. At the corner of Sycamore Street and Church Street, the Decatur Presbyterian Church, organized in 1825, stands one of the earliest congregations in town. The Methodist Church also stands on Sycamore Street; together with the Presbyterian congregation, these were the only churches in Decatur until 1870. Hillyer Place, which crosses Sycamore, was originally called Line Street, and marked the eastern boundary of town between 1823 and 1871. Around the turn of the century Sycamore Street received more fashionable homes, which continued through the first decades of the twentieth century.



These few streets contain almost all of the house styles found anywhere in Decatur and are a living “museum” of the transitions in residential development. The lot sizes, too, vary, showing some of the other dimensions of that development. Almost every kind of exterior covering is found here as well – brick, wood, sheathed wood, stucco, stone. Foundations vary from early piers to continuous bricking. The houses are completely various in size, from the tiniest in Decatur to several of the largest.

Landscaping around them also varies. There is everything in the front yards from unpaved street remnants to formal plantings, including contemporary lawns, naturalistic and even folk landscape elements. Setbacks vary accordingly, from a short ten feet up to seventy feet. The area is, therefore, extremely rich in “antiquities” and in varieties of historical architecture. Such an area does not contain the homogeneity found in other neighborhoods in Decatur; one would not expect it, since the variety of housing style is common in old residential sections which have received some of everything over the years.”

## ■ Condition

The houses and other buildings with in the proposed Old Decatur Historic District are a reflection of the City itself. With some of the homes virtually unchanged to those that have been modified significantly, each property was evaluated based upon age of the structure, character of the structure to its own time, and character of the structure to the neighborhood as a whole. Additional consideration was given to the oldest structures in the proposed district.

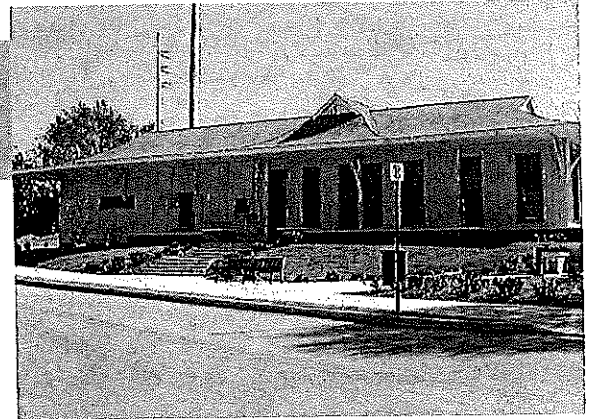
- 18% -- Very Historic / Nearly Original
- 19% -- Historic / Minor Modifications
- 36% -- Moderately Historic / 0Modified
- 14% -- Major Modifications
- 2% Non-Historic

## ■ Number of Properties

A total of 112 parcels were identified in the proposed district, not including several condominium developments, which are more readily identified as a single entity. Of these 112 parcels, 86 are single-family residences, 19 are professional office/commercial, 7 are duplex/apartment, 6 are governmental/institutional, and 11 are lots only. Most of the 12 lots are extremely small and not suitable for building.

## ■ Intrusions and Non-Historic Properties

According to DeKalb County tax records only four structures in the proposed district are less than 50 years old – the bus station (recently converted into Fellini’s Pizza) built in



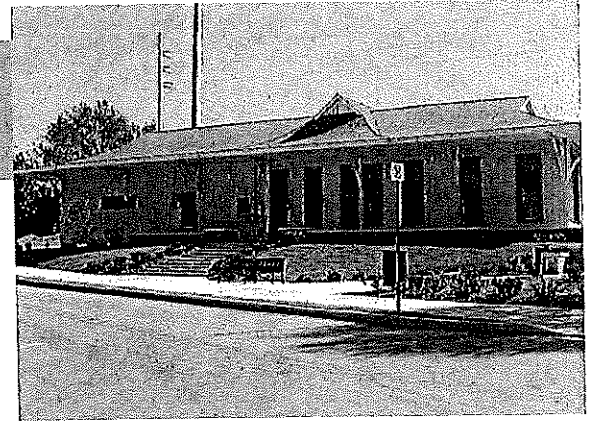
1965; the houses at 122 Barry Street built in 1998 and 103 Mountain View Street; and one of the buildings at the Ice House Lofts complex, built in 2000. All of these structures are compatible with the district – none of them constitute an “intrusion.”

Four properties have been identified to be out of character with the district:

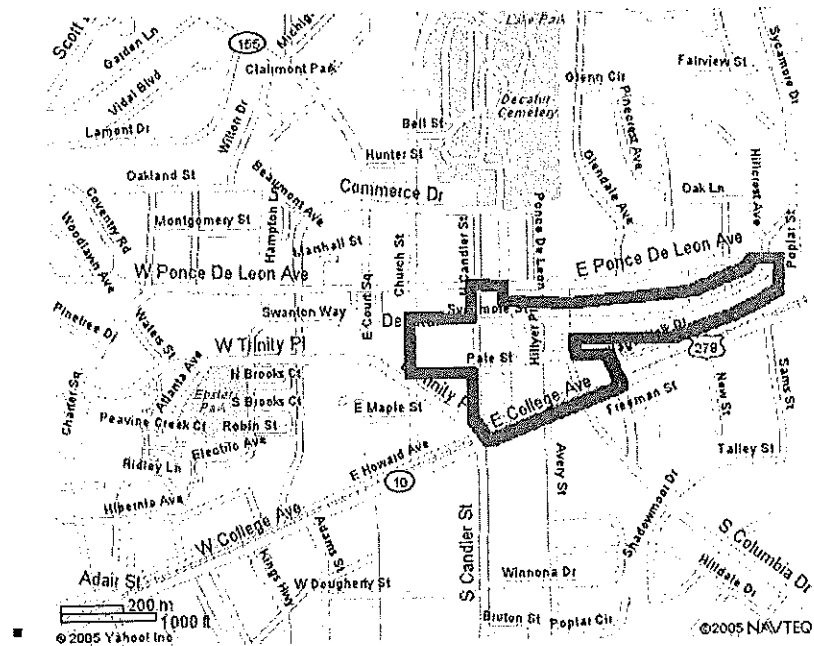
- 118 Barry Street is a house, which has been converted to commercial/mixed use. The front porch has been enclosed with white brick. The roof-line appears original to the previous use and the windows and other details on the side and rear elevations appear to be original to the structure. One of the main detracting features of this property is that the front yard has been asphalted to provide parking for the commercial use, and this is problematic.
- 104 Sycamore Place is a strip style commercial building. This structure according to DeKalb County tax records was constructed in 1957, however the style of the architecture appears to be more consistent with the 1970's. The center does have landscaped islands which help soften the façade, and a more sympathetic renovation could easily make this structure fit into the district.
- 422 East Howard Avenue is also a house converted to commercial use. Again, like 118 Barry Street the front of the house has been bricked and the façade made to look contemporary to perhaps the 1970's. The more contemporary additions envelope the original structure, whose roofline is visible above. The property is slated for demolition.
- 310 East Howard Avenue is a small, free standing commercial building built of concrete block, which was built in 1957 according to DeKalb County tax records. This structure is fairly anonymous, and with minimal treatment could be made into an asset to the district.

The houses at 506 Sycamore Street and 108 Glenn Street are 1950's ranch houses. They are nice brick structures, although architecturally non-conforming with other structures within the proposed district.

Several groups of condominiums are also located through out the proposed district these structures were primarily built in the 1980's. They are all neo-traditional brick two-three story structures, which although architecturally non-conforming they do not detract from the proposed district.



■ **Boundaries of District**



*Figure 1 - Street Map Showing Proposed District Boundaries (yahoo maps)*

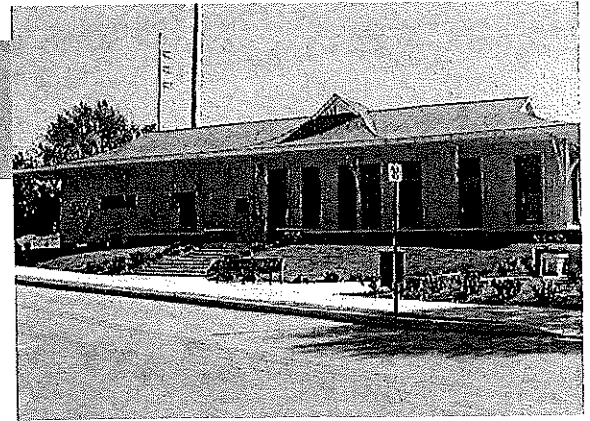
■ **Maps**

- See Appendix A

■ **Photographs**

- Aerial Photographs – See Appendix B
- Historical Photographs – See Appendix C





## History of Old Decatur

“Old Decatur”, which lies along Sycamore Street, Hillyer Place, Sycamore Place, Barry Street, Pate Street, and North Candler Street, is the oldest residential area in Decatur.

Not many streets two short blocks long have as many historical associations as has old Line Street, now Hillyer Place. It marks an old landline that touched on one end the old stagecoach road, now Sycamore Street, and at the other end the path that the Georgia Railroad was to follow in 1845. Line Street's most famous resident was Martha Compton, for whom Marthasville, Atlanta's designation when the first railroad train arrived, was named. Next door to Mrs. Compton's home was that of the late Captain Joel Mable, the son of the namesake of another Georgia town, Mableton.

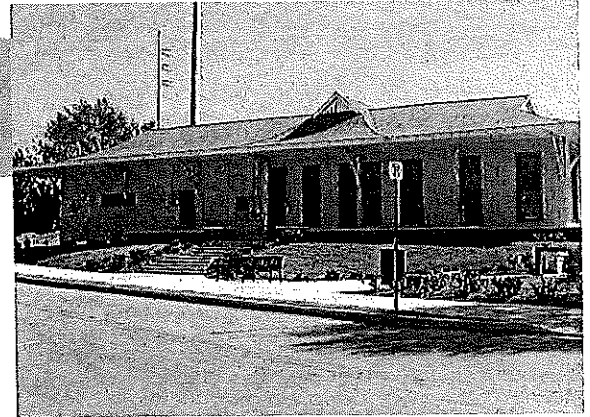
As a thoroughfare, Sycamore Street goes far back beyond the white man. It was the east-west trail or trade route of the Creek Indians from Augusta on the Savannah River, via Stone Mountain to Sandtown, an Indian trading village on the Chattahoochee River. On the site of the Sycamore Square townhouses stood the Midway or Halfway Inn, so called because it was halfway between Chattanooga and Augusta.

One of Decatur's oldest homes still stands at the corner of Sycamore and North Candler Streets, the WILLIAMS-EVANS house. It is believed that the home was built during the 1830s by or for Charles Murphey who served as a U.S. Congressman and State Senator. Hiram Williams, Decatur's Post Master during the Civil War, later occupied the home. Sherman is said to have watered his horse at a well in the corner of the lot, a site now ivy-covered.

Decatur Methodist Episcopal Church, South (now Decatur First United Methodist Church) was organized between 1823-1826. Its first building was erected in 1826. In 1897, a new granite church, the third structure, was built beside the old wooden sanctuary. The cost of the new church was \$6,626. DFUMC is the oldest Methodist church in the Atlanta area.

The home at 218 Barry Street is one of the oldest residential structures remaining in DeKalb County, dating back to 1855. The STEWARD-ROLAND house was owned for a number of years by Mr. John B. Steward (1833-1893) who was a county ordinary and member of the state legislature. The house was moved in the late 19th Century approximately 100 yards south. Sanders Rowland recalls the summer day “a huge crew of workmen descended on our house. They loosened it from its foundation and brought in several big, long logs for rollers. With a strong mule pulling, several men guiding, and several others moving the rollers, they rolled the house down the way and put it on a new foundation on the lower lot.”

Edward Moses Sutton built the home at 209 North Candler Street in 1911. Sadly, Mr. Sutton died just months before construction was completed. Mrs. Sutton, two teenage sons, and a teenage nephew moved into the house. In 1964, Mrs. Sutton celebrated her 96th birthday in her North Candler Street home. She was, at that time, the oldest living alumna of LaGrange College and the oldest living member of Decatur First United Methodist Church.



The Georgia Railroad was incorporated in 1834 making it the oldest railroad having continuous operation in the world. Decatur was to be the railroad terminus, but local residents, fearing noise and pollution, asked to be bypassed, sending it five miles west to Marthasville (now Atlanta). The depot building represents the 19th Century at its most interesting, and the type of station is vanishing from the urban landscape.

Sarah "Sallie" Durham, daughter of Dr. William Durham, lived on Sycamore Street with her parents and siblings just east of Col. George W. Scott's home (the site of the current Recreation Center). At that time the Durham house faced toward the train depot. On September 1, 1865, while preparing breakfast for her family Sallie Durham became Decatur's only casualty of the Civil War, struck by a bullet fired from a train carrying Union soldiers passing through Decatur. Mary A. H. Gay recounted a full account of Sallie Durham's death in her memoir, "Life in Dixie During the War".

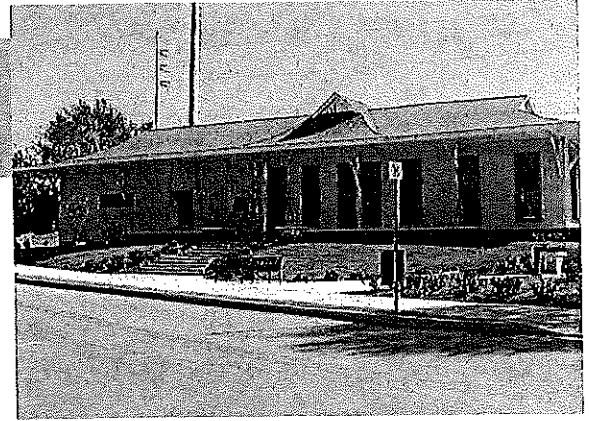
The Murphy, Scott, and Candler families, all pioneers and among the first residents of Decatur. Members of those families were prominent businessmen, members of both the Georgia Legislature and Senate, the U.S. Congress, soldiers and public servants all have roots along Sycamore Street. Col. George W. Scott was Town Commissioner of Decatur in 1881. On February 14, 1881, Col. Scott submitted the design for the well house to be located in the Cemetery, which still stands today. Col. Scott was also one of the founders of the Decatur Female Seminary, later due to his generosity was renamed the Agnes Scott Institute in honor of his mother.

Leon O'Neal, known as "Country" became station master for the Georgia Railroad in Decatur in March, 1912. Mr. O'Neal resided at 214 Barry Street. He later became assistant to Scott Candler while he was Commissioner of Roads and Revenue for DeKalb County. Leon O'Neal helped to establish and was an early president of the Decatur Board of Trade, the present Chamber of Commerce. Mr. O'Neal was also a founding Director of the Decatur Federal Savings & Loan Association (later FirstUnion Bank and currently Wachovia). Mr. O'Neal's grandson, Fred Enloe still resides at 214 Barry Street.

Judge George Hillyer, whose home stood at the corner of Hillyer Place and East Howard Avenue, had the honor of admitting Woodrow Wilson to membership in the Georgia Bar.

## Significance

- Oldest Neighborhood in Decatur
- Variety of Architectural Styles
- A living museum of residential
- Continuity of families – Candler's own 220 North Candler; Enloe family has occupied the house at 214 Barry Street since 1912; Margaret Garrison and her mother lived at 136 Barry Street since the house was built in 1915 (her son now owns the house)



- The fact that the neighborhood has survived at all –urban renewal of the 1960's; flight to the suburbs in the 1970's; commercialization pressures of the 1980's and 1990's, and redevelopment in the 2000's.

### Sources of Information

- Vanishing DeKalb, A Pictorial History," DeKalb Historical Society, 1985
- "The Story of Decatur 1823-1899," Caroline McKinney Clarke, 1973 Wolfe Publishing, Fernandina Beach, Florida
- "Life in Dixie During the War 1861-1865," Mary A. H. Gay, 1897 (Fifth Edition, reprinted 1979 Darby Printing Company, Atlanta)
- Decatur Historic Preservation Resource Manual, The City of Decatur and The Decatur Historic Preservation Commission, September 1982 (Historic Resource Survey by Darlene Roth, Ph.D.)
- Vanishing Georgia,
- Atlanta Time Machine,
- Map Room, University of Georgia
- Map Room, DeKalb County
- DeKalb History Center archives

Appendix A -- Maps

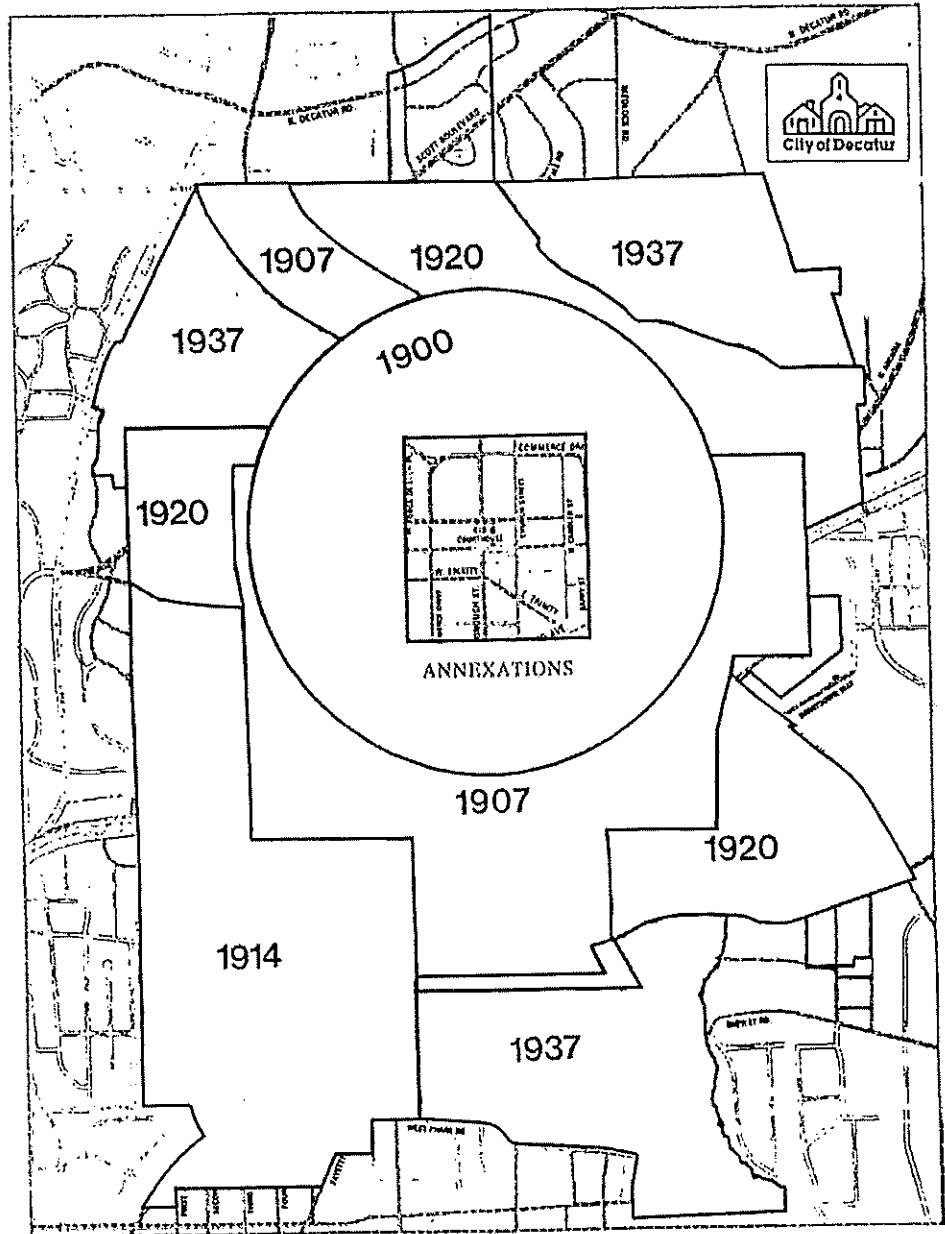
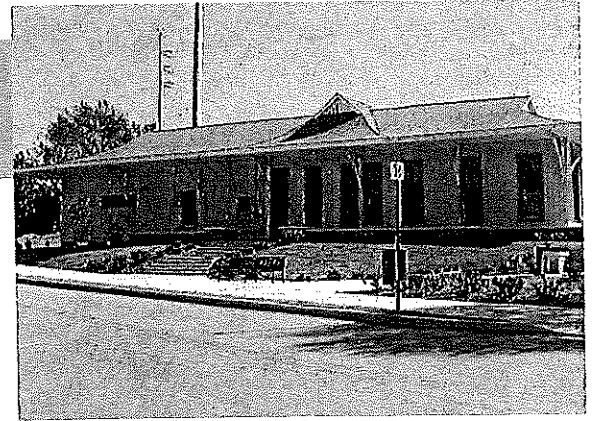


Figure 2 - City of Decatur Annexations Chronology, Decatur Historic Preservation Resource Manual

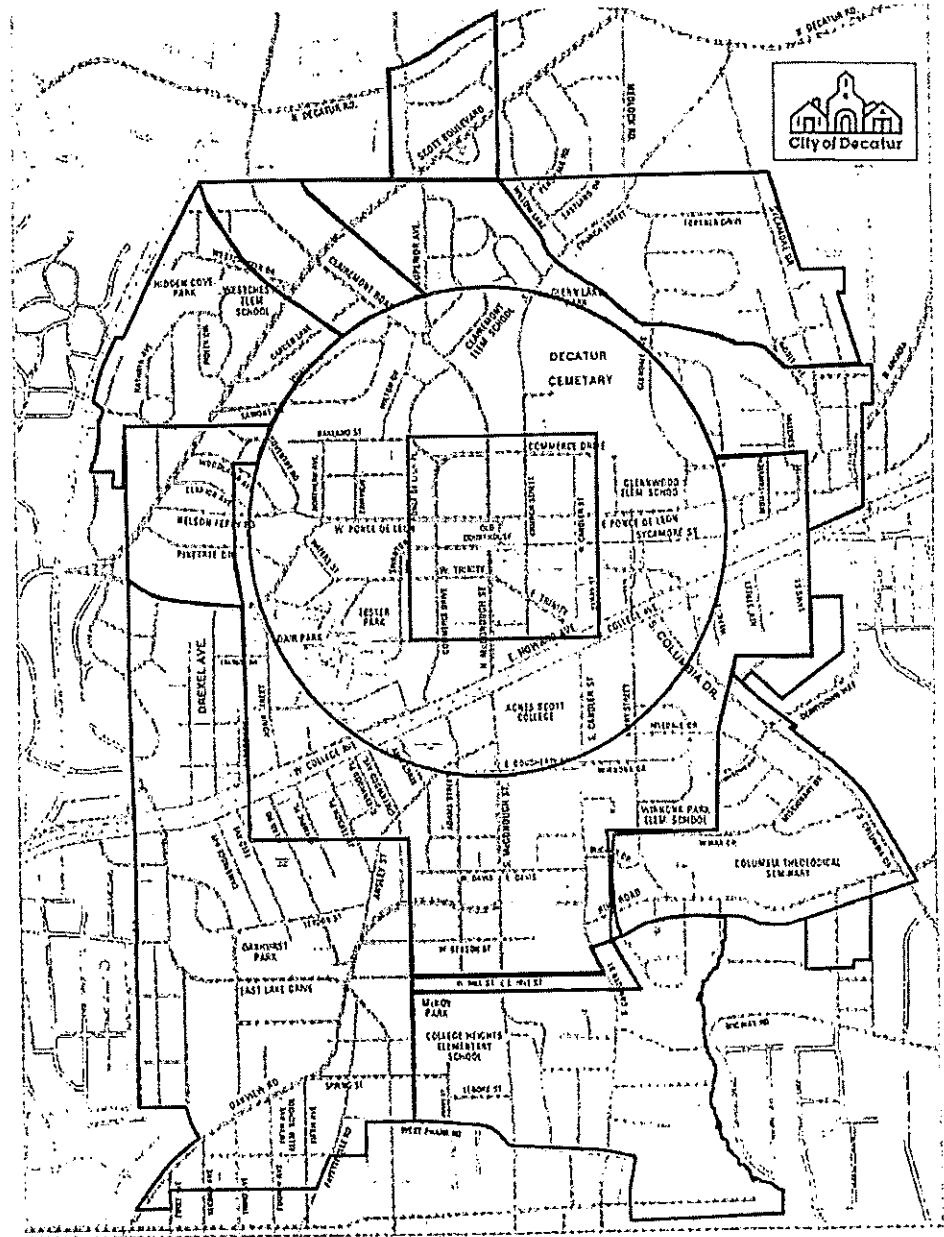
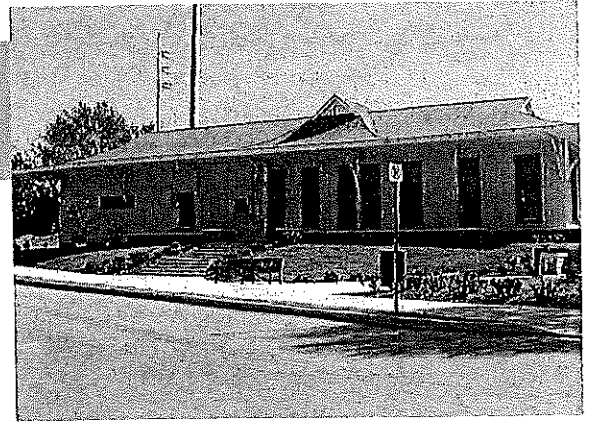
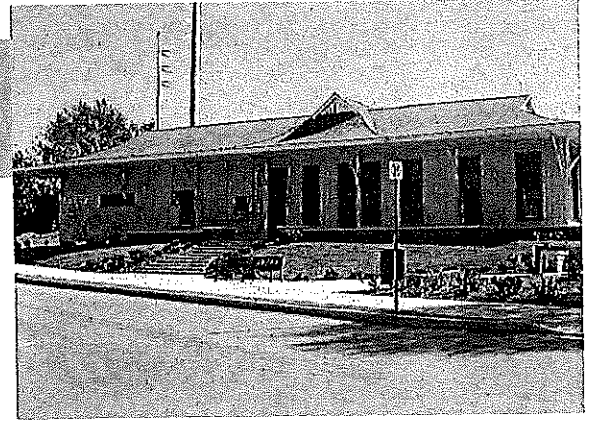
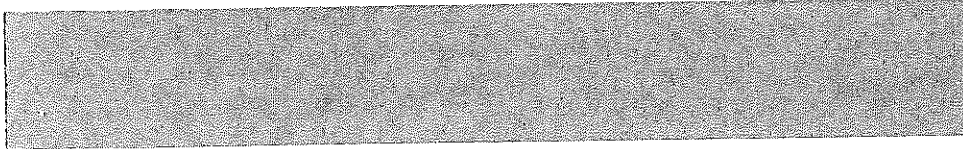


Figure 3 - City of Decatur, Decatur Historic Preservation Resource Manual



1

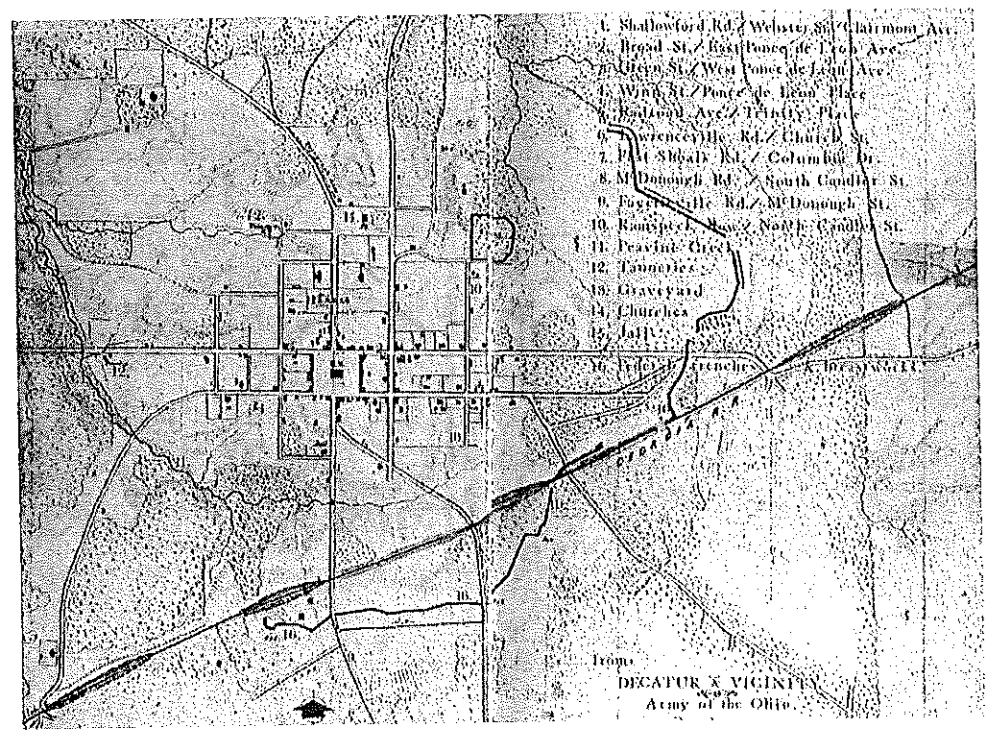


Figure 4 - Decatur & Vicinity, Map by the Army of the Ohio, 1864

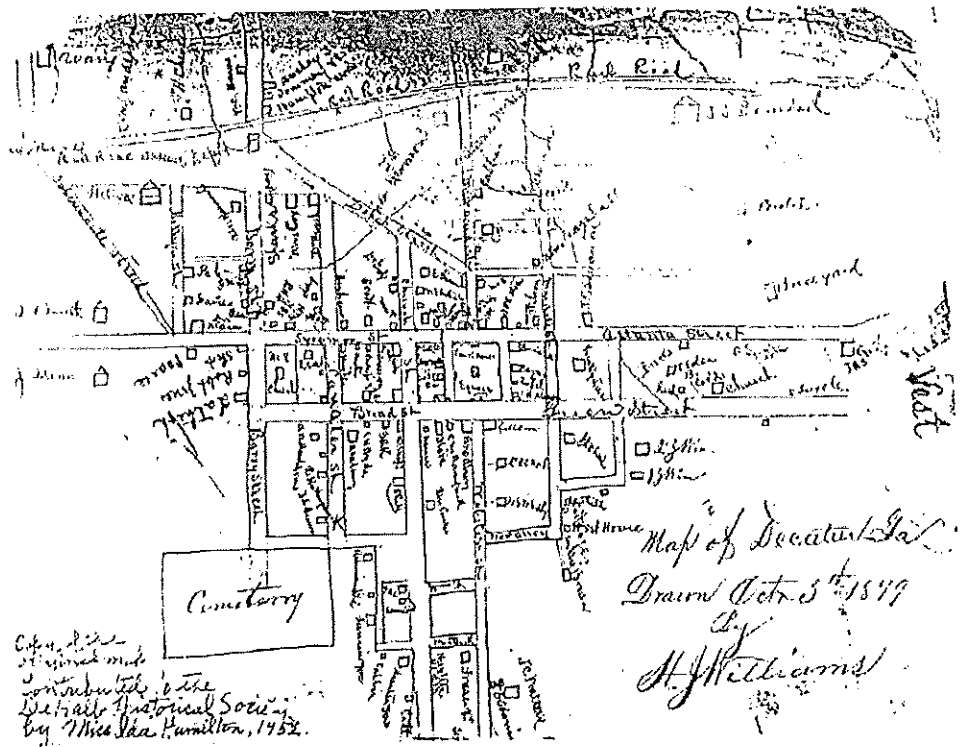
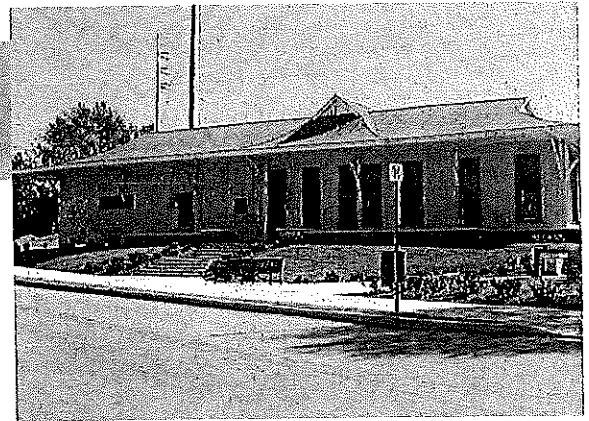


Figure 5 -- Decatur, 1879 DeKalb Historical Society

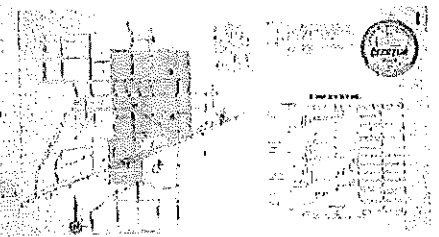
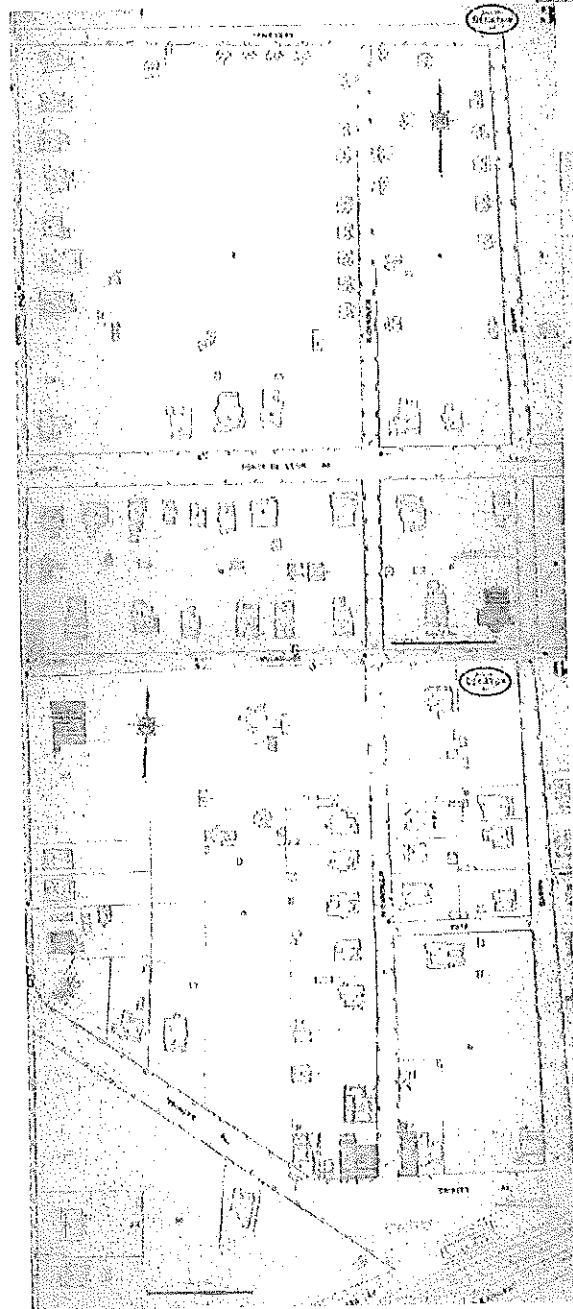
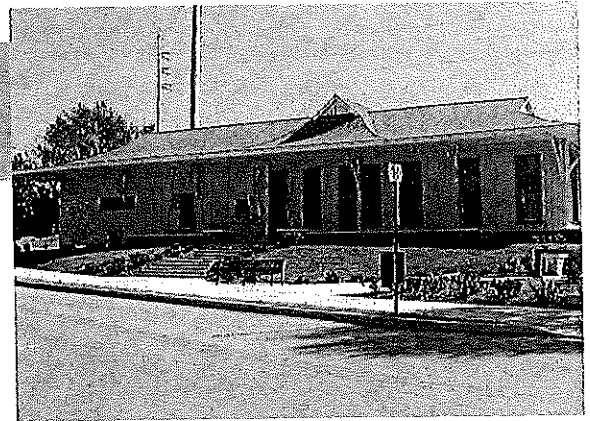


Figure 6b - Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Index, 1911

Figure 6 - Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1911



Appendix B - Aerial Photographs

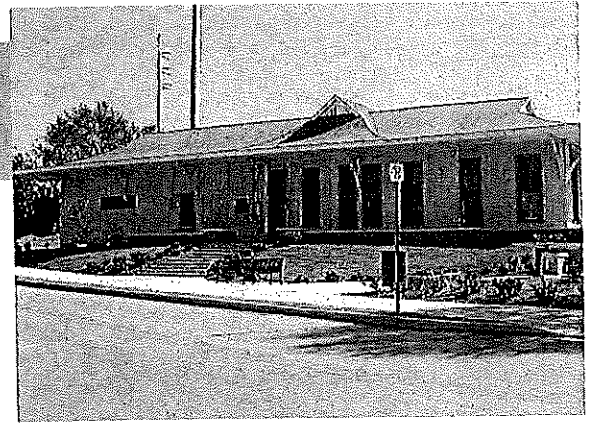
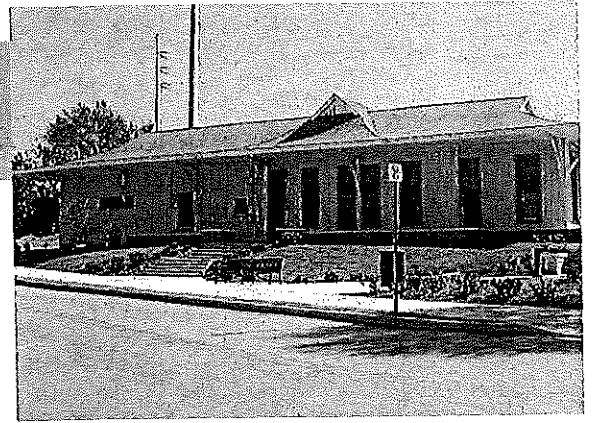
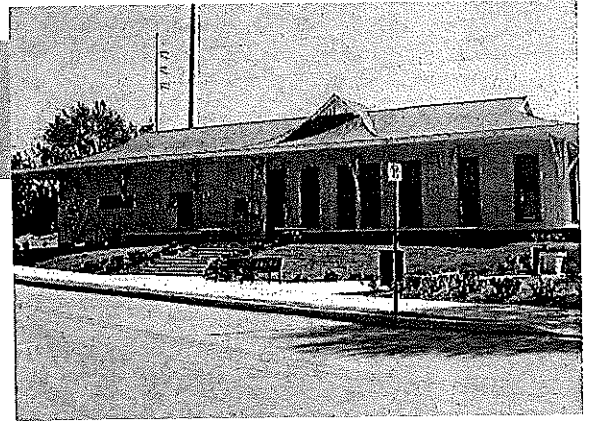


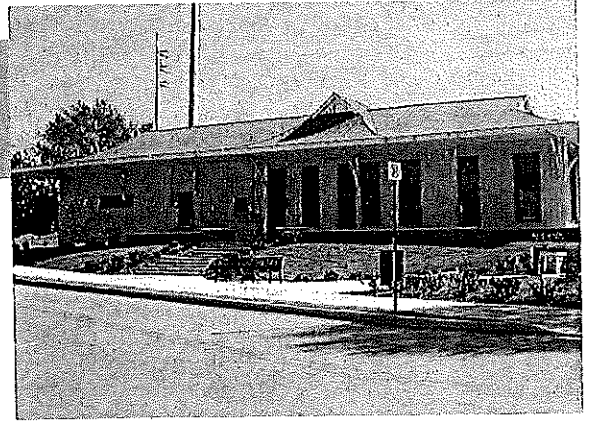
Figure 7 - Aerial Photograph 1940



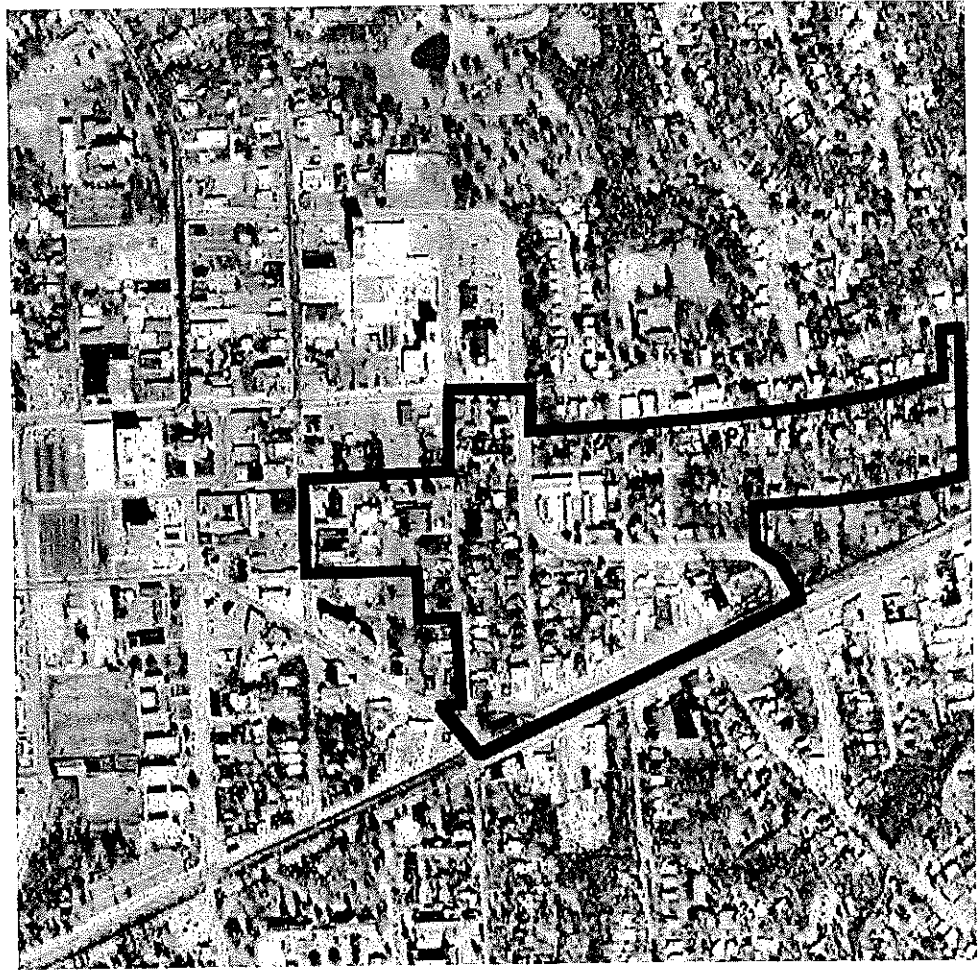
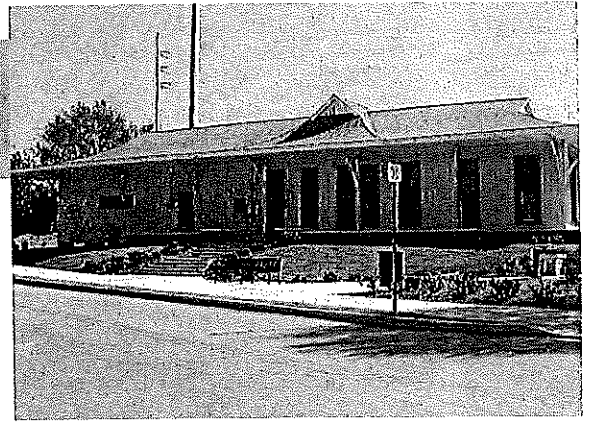
*Figure 8 - Aerial Photograph 1949*



*Figure 9 - Aerial Photograph 1960*

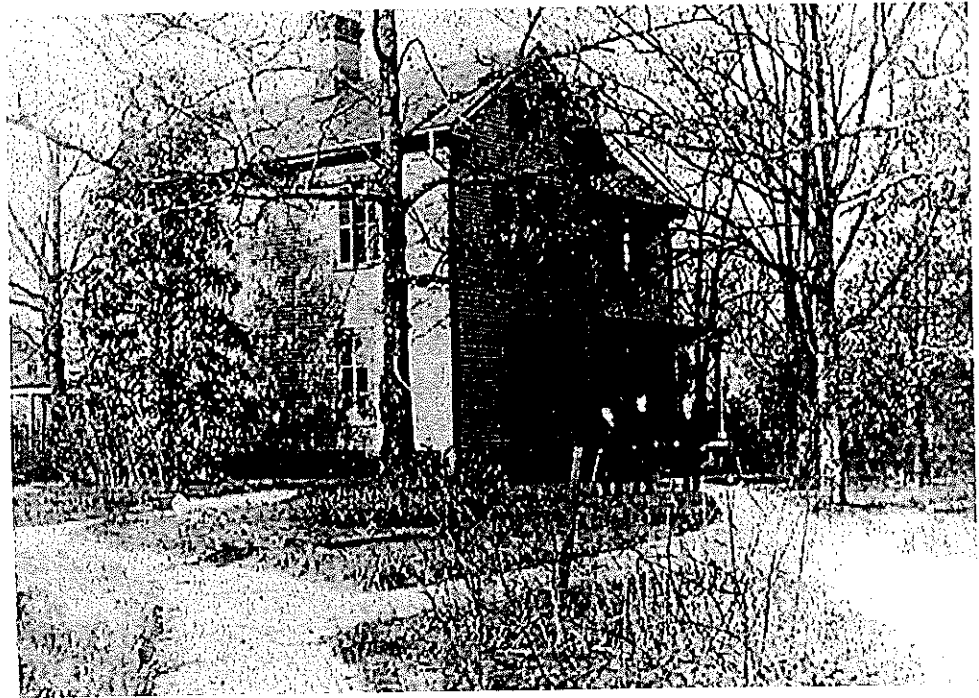
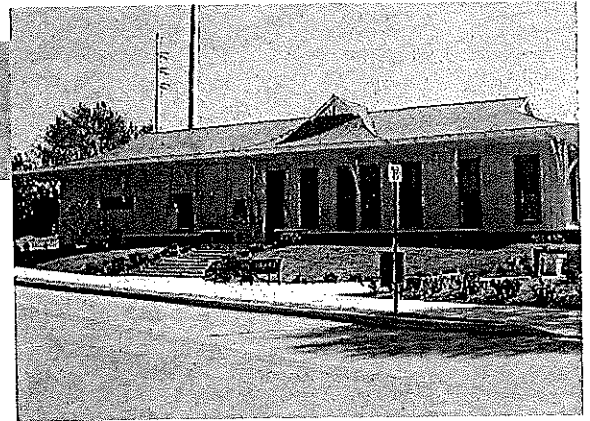


*Figure 10 - Aerial Photograph 1968*

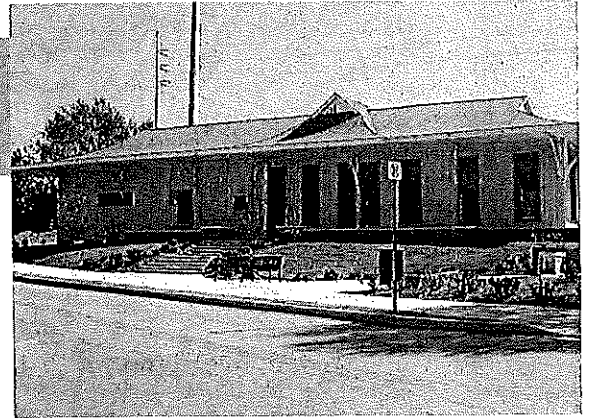


*Figure 11 - Aerial Photograph 1972*

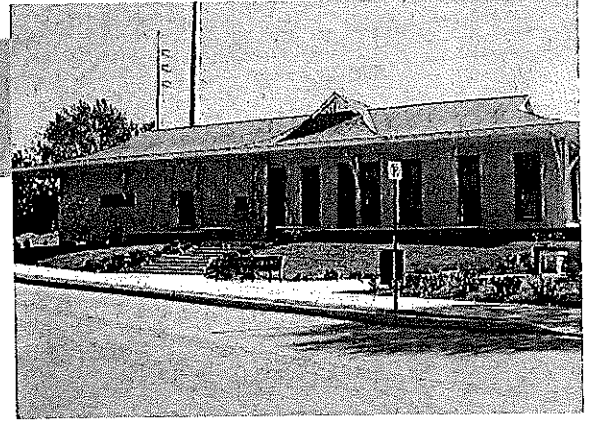
Appendix C - Historical Photographs



*Figure 12 - Home of Judge George Hilyle, c. 1890 (Corner of East Howard Avenue & Hilyer Place*

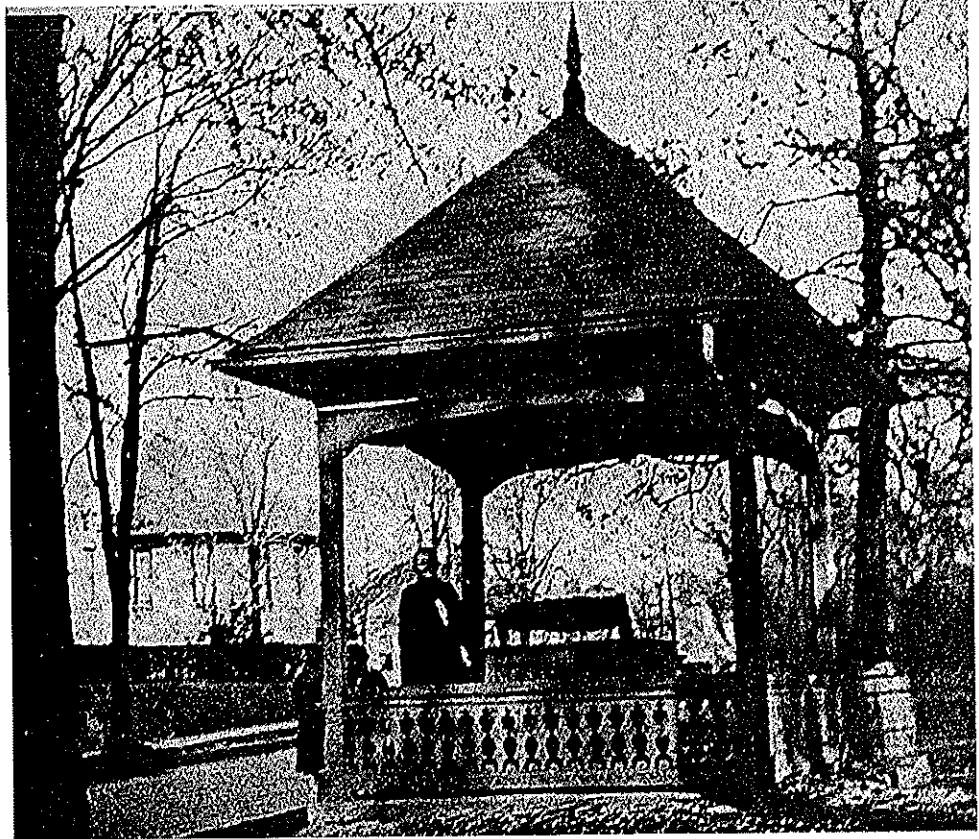
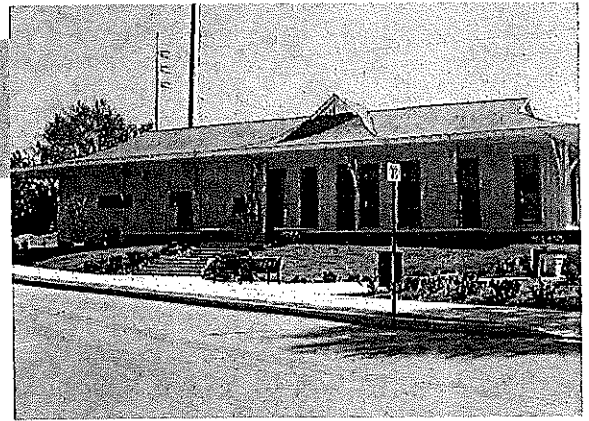


*Figure 13 - Mariann McClellan crossing Sycamore Street, 1890's (looking east from North McDonough Street)*

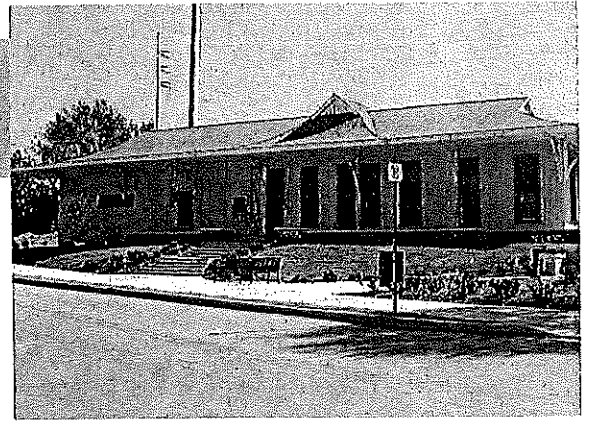


*Figure 14 - Decatur First Methodist, 1897 (Rock Chapel under construction)*

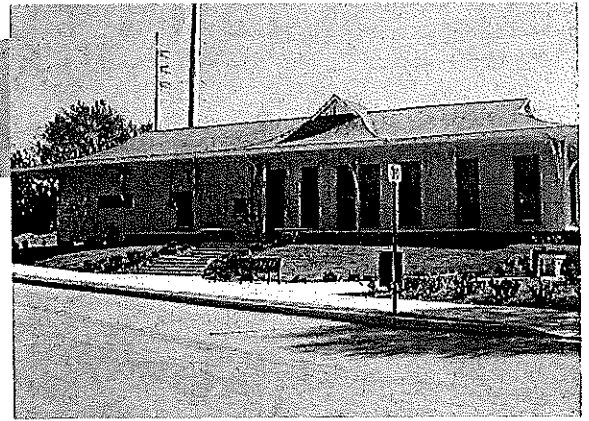




*Figure 15 - Hiram Williams (Figh) well house, Mrs. "Miss Belle" Williams, after 1897*



*Figure 16 - Presbyterian Parsonage, Sycamore Street 1900*



*Figure 17 - Sycamore Street from Methodist Episcopal Church, 1917?*

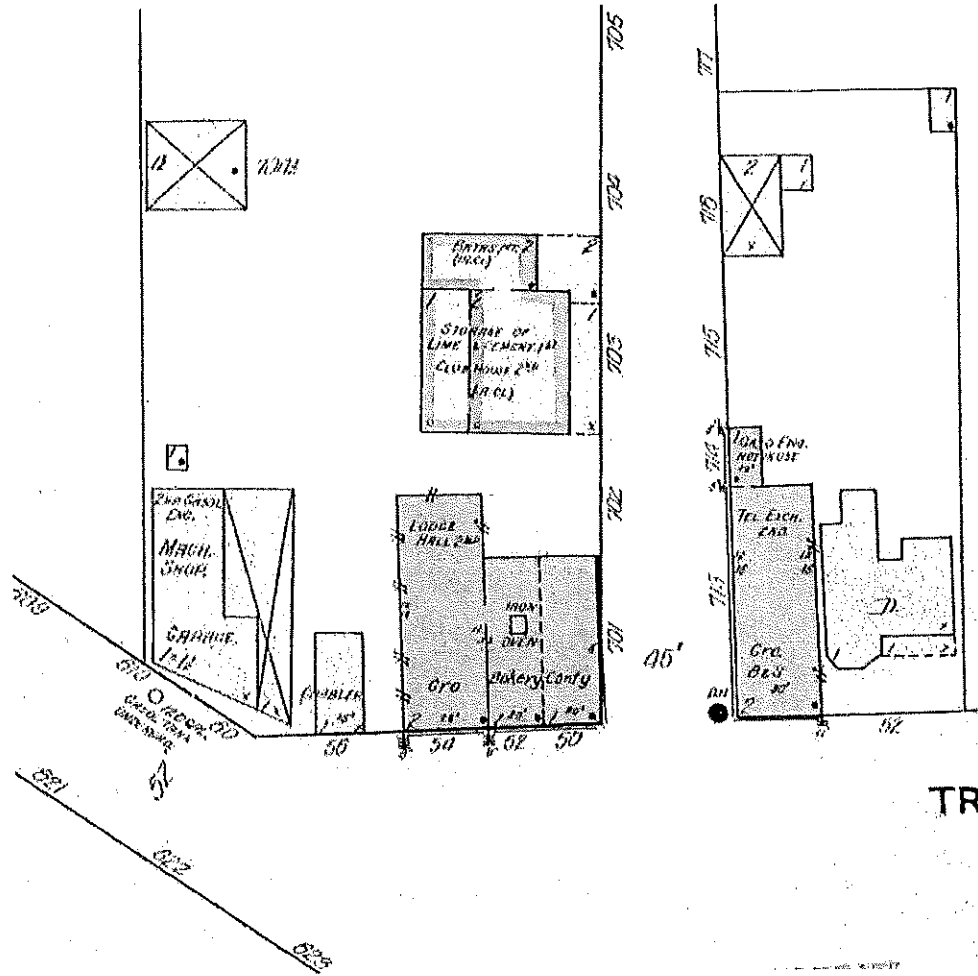
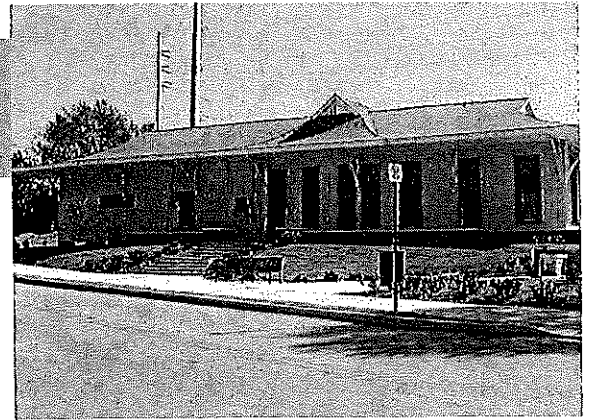
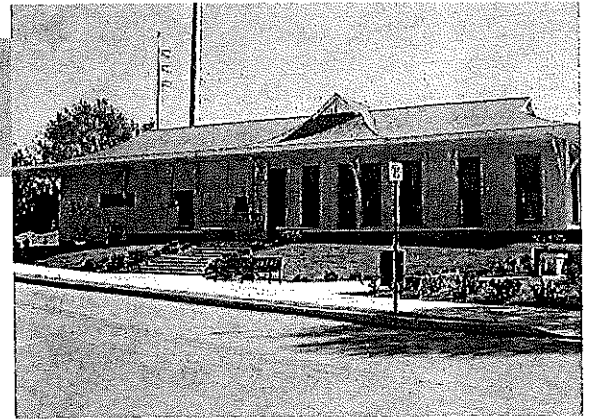


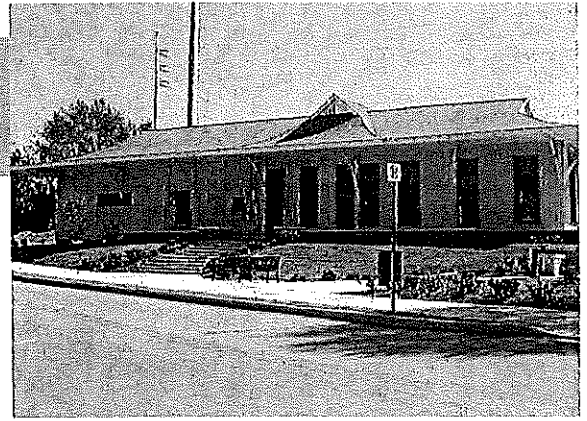
Figure 18 - East Howard Street Shops, 1911



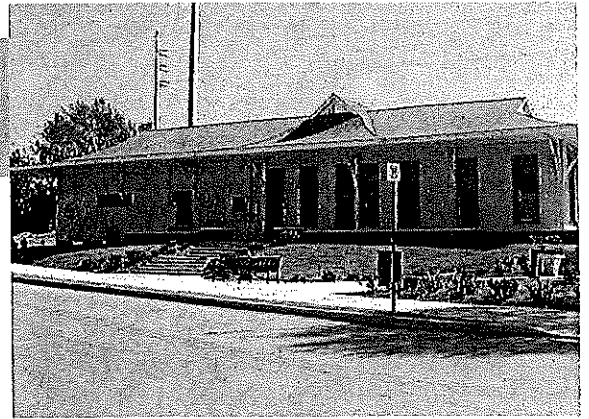
*Figure 19 - Murphy Scott Cooper House, 1940's (site of the Decatur Recreation Center)*



*Figure 20 - 221 North Candler Street, 1943*



*Figure 21 - Presbyterian Church, Sycamore Street 1946*



**Special Collections Department, Pullen Library, Georgia State University**

*Figure 22 - Decatur Library, Sycamore Street 1950*



*Figure 23 - Depot @ Barry Street, 1953*

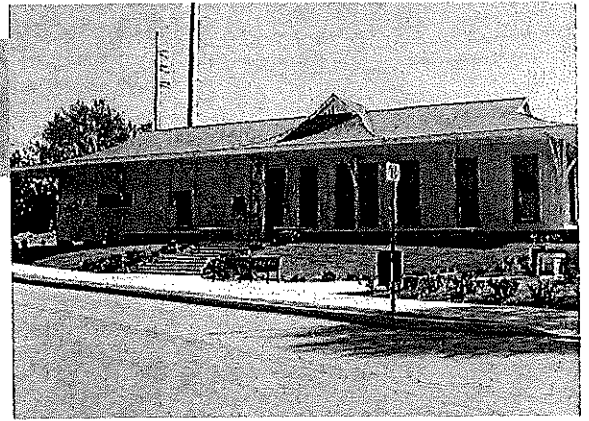
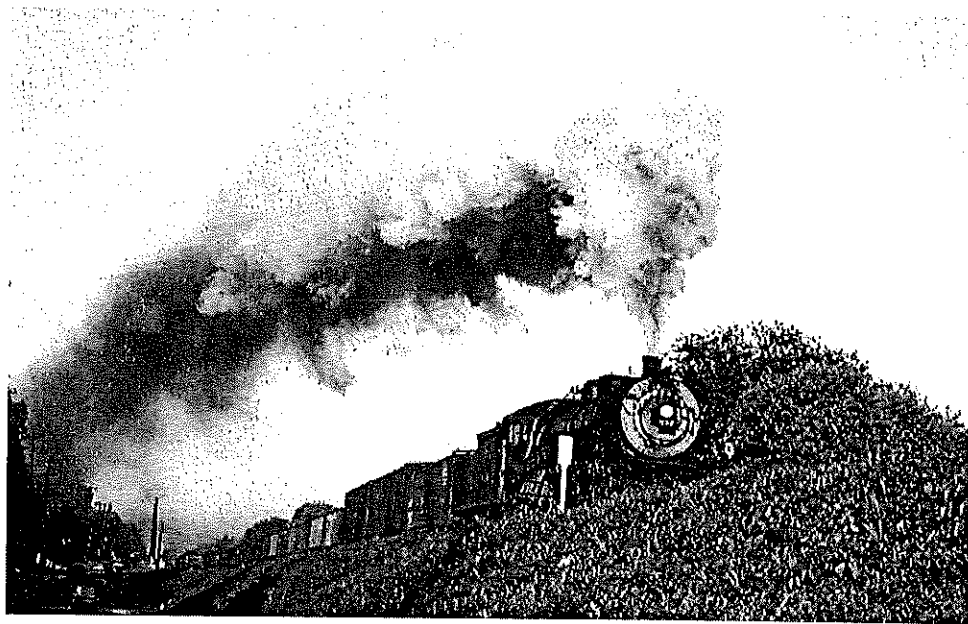
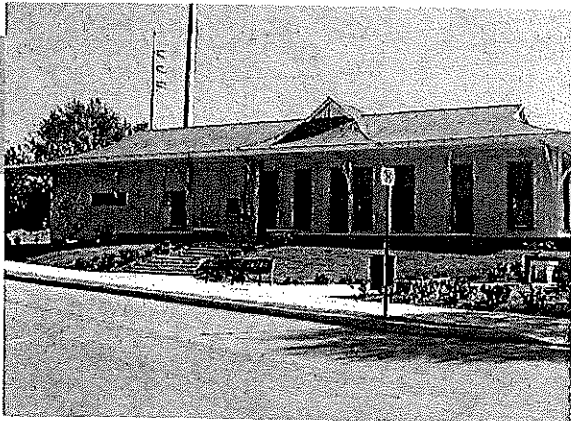


Figure 24 - 320 East Howard Avenue, 1950

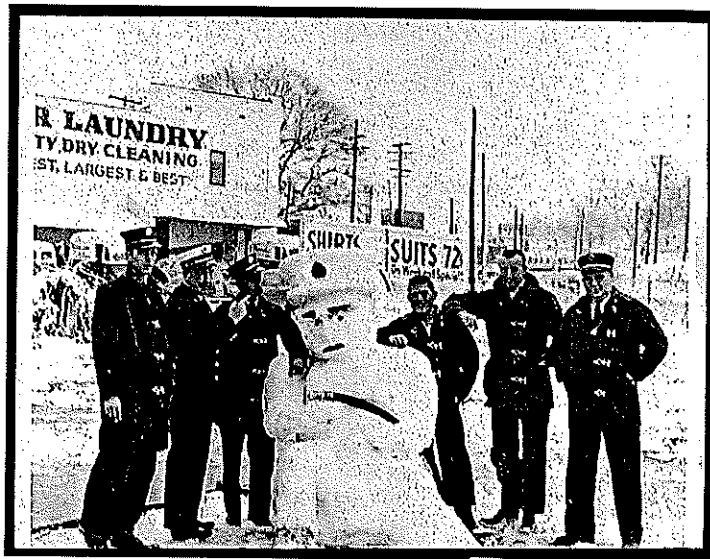


Figure 25 - 320 East Howard Avenue, 1953





*Figure 26 - Georgia Railroad departing Decatur heading east, 1950's*



*Figure 27 - North Candler Street @ East Howard Avenue & Trinity Street, 1957*

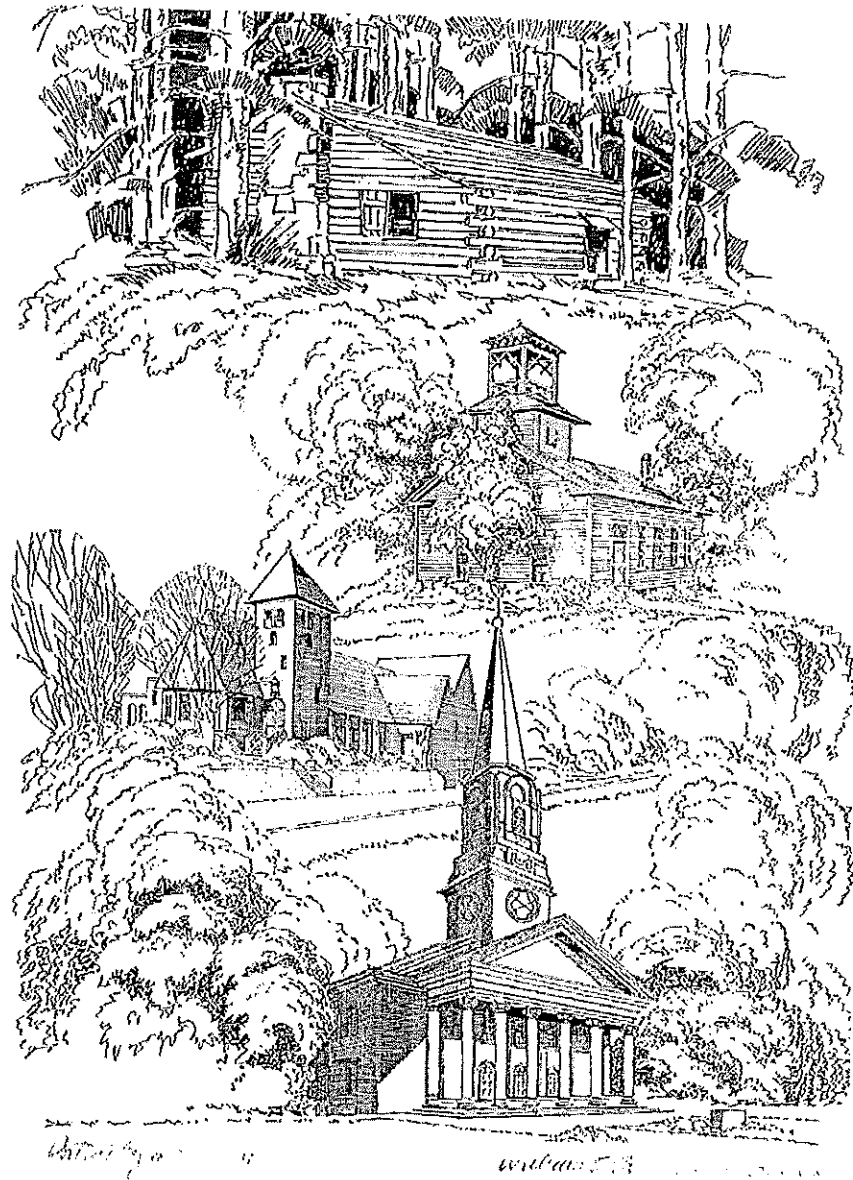
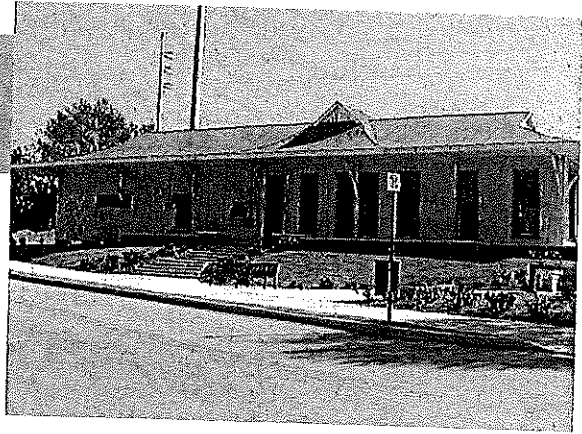


Figure 28 - Decatur First United Methodist Church Buildings, 1826 - before 1868 - 1899 - 1970. The original small wooded structure was built on Sycamore and Barry Street in 1826 and has occupied the same site since that time.