

RECEIVED

MAR 1 1991

Ala. Historical Commission



Alabama Register Property Information

1. Name

historic ~~BRIDGE~~ TENNESSEE RIVER BRIDGE

and/or common

2. Location

street & number TENNESSEE RIVER

city, town FLORENCE X vicinity of MILE # 256.5

state ALABAMA county LAUDERDALE COLBERT

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name JOHN BAKER Co NORFOLK-SOUTHERN CORP.

street & number P.O. BOX 1870

city, town MONTGOMERY, AL. 36103 vicinity of state

5. Please use space below to sketch floor plan/site plan.

6. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

THE BRIDGE IS A STEEL TRUSS STRUCTURE SUPPORTED BY STONE & CONCRETE PIERS.

7. Significance

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

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

THE FLORENCE BRIDGE COMPANY WAS CHARTERED IN 1832 BY THE ALABAMA LEGISLATURE. THE BRIDGE WAS BURNED DURING THE CIVIL WAR THEN REBUILT IN THE 1870'S. THIS BRIDGE IS ONE OF TWO OLDEST BRIDGES LEFT IN THE STATE OF ALABAMA.

8. Major Bibliographical References

THIS BRIDGE HEAVILY DOCUMENTED BY THE ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

9. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

Verbal boundary description and justification

TENNESSEE RIVER MILE # 256.5, NORTH END PATTON, SOUTH END COLBERT CO.

10. Form Prepared By

name/title BOB WHITTEN

organization OLD RAILROAD BRIDGE COMPANY date FEB. 27, 1991

street & number 217 E. IRVING RD. telephone 205-267-6338

city or town FLORENCE state ALA.

11. Please submit color slides of the property with this form.

SLIDES NOT AVAILABLE

12. Please return ALABAMA REGISTER form to:

ALABAMA REGISTER COORDINATOR
ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
725 MONROE STREET
MONTGOMERY ALABAMA 36130

Knoxville - December 19, 1960 m/w

M E M O R A N D U M

Tennessee River Bridge, Florence, Alabama, M.P. 5.7 -MF

History with respect to governmental actions and use of bridge by other than Southern Railway or predecessors:

A ferry was in existence at this location in 1832, probably having been licensed by county authorities some time between 1813 and 1832 in accordance with an Alabama Act approved December 12, 1827, which gave county courts such authority.

Alabama Act approved January 12, 1832 covered the incorporation of the Florence Bridge Company and authorized a bridge to be built, without any description of its nature being given. Tolls were not to exceed ferry rates then current. The stock subscription was to be \$60,000, plus \$35,000 stock which was to be given the Ferry Company for the value of its investment in ferry landings and ferry equipment. Alabama Act approved December 23, 1837 amended the 1832 Act by allowing the Florence Bridge Company to sue stock subscribers who did not pay up.

The Florence Bridge Company completed the first bridge in 1840. One source describes it as being of timber spans about 8 in number. In 1854 wind storm damage occurred and in 1855 damage again occurred to the extent that this bridge was no longer used. Some sources say that the 1855 damage was from wind, others that it was from flood.

About 1857 the Memphis and Charleston Railroad acquired the property and franchise of the Florence Bridge Company, including the piers, and proceeded with the construction of a combination railway and wagon bridge, with the railway deck on the upper level. The October 5, 1859 issue of the Florence Gazette reported the bridge open for wagons, and the issue of December 7, 1859, with the first regular train schedule being effective December 7, 1859. No description of this bridge is available but it probably was mostly of timber on stone piers. It was burned by Helm's Confederate Cavalry in 1863 for military reasons.

In 1869-1870 the bridge was rebuilt by the M&C, using spans as described in M&C annual report of July 1, 1869. This bridge accommodated wagons on lower level as before and was completed in 1870.

In 1887 the Nashville, Florence and Sheffield Railroad Company, predecessor of L&N, built into Florence from the north, and by agreement of August 17, 1887, acquired the right to use the bridge jointly with the N&C. A valuation of the property was agreed on but no record has been found of the details of it except as later partially quoted in the negotiations leading to a new agreement in 1892, N.F.&S. payments were to be 50% of interest of 6% on investment and in ratio of car count applied to maintenance cost (less toll revenues).

Annual reports of the Chief of Engineers, U.S. Army, show that the 1890 drawbridge construction came as a result of notices issued by the U.S. Army District Engineer, Chattanooga, to the STV&G on November 20, 1888 and to the M&C on January 11, 1889. (Volume 88, pp. 2638-2642; Volume 89, p. 374; Volume 90, p. 339; Volume 91, p. 435). The last reference is with respect to a notice to cut masonry back to clear the channel. The references given do not include the text of the notices. The 1890 construction included the drawspan and also the short span south of it. For some unknown reason this short span was replaced in 1906 at the same time that new machinery for the drawspan was installed.

On October 18, 1891 a train fell through the north approach and an outside engineer, Mr. Edwin Thatcher, made an investigation and report. His recommendations led to a new agreement of July 12, 1892, in which the N.F.&S. paid for their use of the bridge by applying car count ratio to the railroad usage percent of interest on investment and maintenance cost, which percentage was set at 78.4 percent. Mr. Thatcher's recommendation also led to the replacement in 1892 to 1894 of all superstructure except the drawspan and the short span immediately south of it, these two spans having been built in 1890.

A controversy with respect to toll rates led to an Alabama Act approved February 9, 1895, in which maximum toll rates were, in cents:

Foot passenger	5	Each horse, mule or animal of like kind with rider	2
Foot passenger under 14, and school attendants	2	Each horse, mule or animal of like kind	5
1-horse vehicle and driver	15	Each cow, steer or animal of like kind	5
2- " " "	25	Each sheep, hog, goat or animal of like kind	3
3- " " "	30		
4- " " "	35		
Each additional passenger	5		

An Alabama Act approved February 10, 1899 repealed the 1895 Act and established the following maximum toll rates, in cents:

Foot passenger	7	4-horse or ox wagon	60
Foot passenger under 12 yrs. and over 5 yrs. of age (under 5 free)	4	6-horse or ox wagon	70
		Special school tickets	3
Horses, mules, cattle in droves, ea.	7	1 man and 1 horse	15
1-horse buggy, cart or dray	20	2-horse carriage or buggy	30
2-horse carriage			

capacity 6 passengers	50	2-horse or ox wagon (A 2-horse wagon may include driver if loaded, or driver and 3 other persons if empty. No wagons containing less than 100 lbs. shall be considered loaded).	30
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No information was found on previous or subsequent toll rates nor on income from tolls.

The operation of street cars over the upper deck of the bridge probably started in 1903 in accordance with an agreement with the Sheffield Company dated February 14, 1903, which had a term of 30 years, and which required the Sheffield Company to pay the Sou. Ry. 20% of fares collected and not less than 2 cents per passenger, except by mutual consent. A supplement agreement of August 23, 1907 has to do with interlocking expense, mail handling, etc. A supplemental agreement of December 28, 1909 reduced the 2 cent figure quoted in the original agreement to 1 cent. By release of May 12, 1919 the Sheffield Company surrendered its mail and passenger handling privileges to the Director-General of Railroads and in 1921 this arrangement was cancelled and operations as they were prior to May 12, 1919 were resumed. by memorandum agreement of May 31, 1926 the Alabama Power Company took over the operations and responsibilities of the Sheffield Company. The date of termination of street car operation was not found, but a statement made in 1933 said "electric car service was abandoned some years ago". No record was found of income from street car operations.

Southern Bell telephone lines over the bridge were covered by agreement of April 18, 1910, superseded by agreement of October 2, 1943, the later agreement being cancelled May 1, 1948.

Alabama Power Company power lines over the bridge were covered by agreement of September 1, 1933, which agreement was cancelled as of June 7, 1943. The Sou. Ty. acquired the power lines by quit-claim deed of June 7, 1943.

An agreement of May 3, 1921 with the City of Florence makes reference to an agreement of October 5, 1918 between the Director-General of railroads and the City of Florence whereby the Director-General leased the highway portion of the bridge to the City for \$10,000 per annum with the City to maintain the highway portion. The 1921 agreement says federal control stopped on February 29, 1920, and that the rental between March 1, 1920 and February 28, 1921 would be compromised at \$4,000, taking into account railway expenditures during this period and other factors. The railway company agreed to pay the city up to \$8,500 for repair of floor and widening of roadway, after which the City was to maintain the highway portion at its expense. The yearly rental specified in the 1921 agreement was \$3,000. Affidavit of December 14, 1922 shows the City spent \$13,134.10 for the repair and widening mentioned above, \$8,500 of which had been contributed by the railway company. It may be implied from information in the 1921 agreement that the City took over the collection of tolls on or about October 5, 1918.

By agreement of February 18, 1926, the highway portion was leased to Colbert County and Lauderdale County for a 3-year term at \$3,000 per annum, with the counties to maintain at their expense. Some years later a newspaper article says the bridge was made a free bridge in 1925. This change may have been coincident with the February 18, 1926 agreement.

By agreement of March 25, 1929 the Alabama Highway Department leased the highway portion for a five year term at \$3,000 per annum, with maintenance at their expense.

Upon completion of a new highway bridge immediately downstream, highway traffic was transferred to it on October 26, 1939, and the timber portion of highway deck on the railroad bridge was removed by the state highway department immediately thereafter.

In 1925 the L&N and Sou. agreed by exchange of letters that the 78.4 percent fixed in the 1892 agreement would be changed to 100%, effective 1920, during which year federal control terminated, and after which the highway expenses and income were to others.

Current joint use of this bridge by L&N is covered by agreement of November 5, 1941, which has a 25 year term and is based on L&N participation in interest on investment and in maintenance by ration of car count. A new valuation was negotiated for this agreement.

The 1887, 1892 and 1941 agreements with L&N or predecessor all have provision for adjustment of valuation from investment changes.

Newspaper references were found to train accidents of 1896 and 1906, the references having been written years later. No support was found as to the 1906 incident but former L&N Supervisor Haynes advises there was an accident about 1896 involving an engine falling off or through the 154' span into the river near the south end of the bridge, Locomotive engineer Clem getting out alive. No evidence of repair of this span is found at the site, possibly due to replacement of any damaged parts, if any, strictly in kind.

Location of reference material:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Place of Person Having Copy</u>
Acts of Alabama Legislature	State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, AL
Newspapers prior 1900	" "
Highways, Boats and Bridges by Brannon	" "
Agreements affecting use of bridge	R.B. Midkiff
Correspondence file, 1918-1920, 1934-1960	R.B. Midkiff
Structure plans 1890-1960	R.B. Midkiff

The Formative Period in Alabama by Thomas Perkins Abernathy	Library, Florence, AL
History of Alabama and her People, by Albert Burton Moore	" "
Memorial Record of Alabama, published by Brant and Fuller	" "
Alabama, by Owen	" "
Northern Alabama,, 1887, by Smith and Deland	" "
Official Souvenir of the Centennial Celebration, Florence, Ala., Aug. 8-10, 1918, prepared by Mr. Robert Dyas	" "
History of Alabama by Pickett	Library, Tuscumbia, AL
Early Settlers of Alabama by Saunders	" "
Alabama - by Brewer	" "
Annual Reports of M&C	G.H. Echols
Annual Reports of Chief of Engineers U.S. Army	Office of Chief Engineer, U.S. Army, Gravelly Point, Washington, D.C.
Legal History of Lines of Railroad of Southern Railway Company	R.B. Midkiff
Two Hundred Years of Muscle Shoals by Leftwich	David Messman
	David V. Messman

GENERAL HISTORY OF THE FLORENCE BRIDGE
FROM 1961 TO DATE

The T.V.A. was ordered by the Federal Court at Florence, Alabama to improve navigation clearance through the horizontal turn span and the bridge was closed to rail traffic in 1961. The turn span and adjacent fixed span were removed and a 406' vertical lift span with flanking tower spans were installed. The work was completed in 1962. During construction, rail traffic was rerouted via other L&N connections to and from Florence. Upon completion, Southern Railway Company paid T.V.A. \$135,000 as its apportionment of the total cost of \$3,500,000.

Prior to 1970, a drawtender was continuously on duty and the bridge was closed to river traffic, being opened by the drawtender on signals sounded by river traffic. Due to a general decline in rail traffic on both the Southern Railway and L&N Railroad, the drawtender was assigned to one shift from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. with rail traffic confined to these hours. The bridge was left unattended in a raised position throughout the rest of the day. Rail traffic over the bridge continued to decline and on April 10, 1986, the L&N cancelled the operating agreement with Southern Railway and discontinued their operations over the bridge.

On July 11, 1988, Southern Railway sold 1.4 miles of track in Florence to the Tennessee Southern Railroad Company, who now operates a short line serving the rail customers in Florence via their L&N connection.

On August 3, 1988 Southern Railway petitioned the ICC to abandon 2.7 miles of the remaining Florence branch which included the bridge over the Tennessee River. On September 6, 1988, the ICC granted the abandonment subject to maintaining the structural integrity of the approach spans until completion of the process under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Bibliography: Southern Railway Archives
Atlanta, Georgia

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Knoxville, Tennessee, Tennessee Valley Authority, 1986.

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Birmingham, Alabama: 1910.

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Pope's Tavern (Lambeth House): Florence's Oldest Structure, Built as a State Stop and Tavern in 1811. Florence, Alabama: Florence Historical Board, n.d.

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DESCRIPTION OF TENNESSEE RIVER RAILROAD BRIDGE

The Tennessee River Railroad Bridge spans the Tennessee River at Florence, Alabama (Lauderdale County) and Sheffield, Alabama (Colbert County). The north approach (Florence) is South Court Street, an area characterized by warehouses and industrial structures and the Florence state dock. The south approach (Sheffield) contains no nearby structures.

The physical description of the bridge is as follows:

- a. There are twenty-eight (28) spans of varied lengths, total length 2,534 ft. (see detailed drawings, Appendix _____).
- b. Truss height - 20 ft.; left height at apex - 75 ft.; tower height (2 towers) - 125 ft.; length 2,534 ft.; width - approx. 10 ft.
- c. Construction type is truss of varied design (see detailed drawings, Appendix _____).
- d. Construction materials are steel (trusses and principal structure), wood (crossties), and concrete (pier).
- e. The bridge is abandoned (see narrative for history of former use and significance).

HISTORY OF TENNESSEE RIVER RAILROAD BRIDGE
AND SURROUNDING AREA

The Tennessee is the largest river flowing through Alabama. It arises at the confluence of the French Broad and Holston Rivers east of Knoxville, Tennessee, flowing in a south westerly direction through North Alabama, then northward to juncture with the Ohio at Paducah, Kentucky.¹

The navigational value of the Tennessee has long been recognized. The potential for marketing agricultural and industrial products has made water transportation a central issue in the development of the Tennessee Valley. The prosperity and growth of the Quad-City area (Florence, Tuscumbia, Sheffield and Muscle Shoals) has thus been intertwined with improvement of navigational and land resources.

Although there is ample evidence of pre-historic Indian occupancy of the Tennessee Valley, the Cherokees, according to their own tradition, claimed to have been the original inhabitants. For some reason, they retired from the area around 1650 but retained claim to the area as hunting grounds. The Shawnees moved in to fill the vacuum. Resentful of this intrusion, the Cherokees went on the warpath against them. They fought for forty years. After 1721, when the Cherokees enlisted the aid of the Chickasaws, the Shawnees were driven north toward the Ohio.²

Early maps indicate that as late as the mid-eighteenth century, the Tennessee Valley was unoccupied. About 1765, however, the great bend in the river south of present Huntsville, Alabama, attracted the Chickasaws. Seeing their hunting grounds threatened, the Cherokees attacked but were decisively defeated in a battle of 1769. The price of victory was so dear that the Chickasaws decided to leave but refused to relinquish claim to the territory. Henceforth both tribes claimed ownership and gradually drifted back into the area.³

Because of the potentially lucrative trade with the Indians, both French and English traders moved into the Tennessee Valley. As early as 1715, a French fort existed at Muscle Shoals. White traders first came in contact with the Chickasaws, and English Americans established a fast and constant friendship with them.⁴ One of these traders was James Logan Colbert, a young Scotsman who left the Carolinas with others moving west. He stopped at Muscle Shoals and married a Chickasaw. The union produced several sons, among whom was George Colbert for whom Colbert County is named. Three of the brothers, George, William, and James led 350 Chickasaws to join Andrew Jackson at the Battle of New Orleans.⁵

Ironically and tragically, for the Indians, the American victory at New Orleans sounded the death knell of their dominance of the Tennessee Valley. After the treaty of 1816 by which the Indians relinquished most of their land in Colbert County, the White man rushed in by the thousands buying the newly acquired lands from the government.⁶

In 1830 President Andrew Jackson summoned the southern tribes to Tennessee. Only the Chickasaws responded. They were told that the President intended to remove them to the West where the government would provide new homes. After a difficult winter expedition to find suitable lands, leaders of the Chickasaws returned in the spring to say that they had failed to find an acceptable location. Nevertheless, after much negotiation and pressure from the government, the Indians accepted removal. Not until 1836 were suitable sites found.⁷ In 1837 began the great trek that the Cherokees were to call the "Trail of Tears".

By the time of Indian removal, development of Lauderdale and Colbert Counties was well underway. These counties lay astride major routes from eastern and central sites to New Orleans (see map showing the Natchez and Gaines Traces and the Military Road, Appendix no. _____). The latter was built after Andrew Jackson persuaded Congress of the utility of a road from Nashville to New Orleans. The route passed through Lawrenceburg in Tennessee, Florence in Alabama and Columbus in Mississippi.⁸ An 1852 copy of the original Cypress Land Company (see below) parchment map⁹ signed by Ferdinand Sannoner, the Italian engineer who surveyed and laid out Florence's town plan, shows the Military Road. Today it is called Hermitage Drive and feeds into Court Street, the principal street of the city. Hermitage Drive passes in front of Pope's Tavern, the oldest structure in Florence.

Pope's Tavern was built in 1811, seven years before Florence was founded. The building is said to have been constructed by LeRoy Pope, a government agent and Thomas Bibb, later governor of Alabama. Used as an inn and stage stop, it welcomed Andrew Jackson in 1814 as he rode toward New Orleans.¹⁰ Today it is preserved as a house museum.

Even prior to Alabama statehood,¹¹ interest in the area prompted the Territorial legislature to create Lauderdale County in 1818, named for Colonel James Lauderdale who was killed at the Battle of New Orleans.¹² Lauderdale County lies west of Limestone County and north of the Tennessee River. The county was made somewhat smaller than originally through an act of the Alabama legislature of 27 November, 1821. The area "in the fork between the rivers Tennessee and Elk" was attached to Limestone County.¹³

Lauderdale County and the towns that sprang up therein produced a bevy of prominent men. Four governors were natives of

the county: Hugh McVay, Robert M. Patton, Edward O'Neal and Emmett O'Neal. Florence was the home of W.C. Handy, the "Father of the Blues". An annual music festival is held in his honor, and his home is maintained as a museum.¹⁴ Among noteworthy early citizens was General John Coffee, Andrew Jackson's right-hand man and leader of the Tennessee Cavalry at the Battle of New Orleans. He resided near Florence for several years and died there in 1833. His wife, who was a sister of Rachel Jackson, lived until the late 1860's or early 1870's.¹⁵

Florence, the county seat of Lauderdale County, situated on the north side of the Tennessee River at an altitude of 522 feet¹⁶ was developed from a tract of land purchased in 1818 from the Federal government by the Cypress Land Company. The town was laid out by Ferdinand Sannoner (Sanoma), an Italian surveyor who named the town after the beautiful city of his native Tuscany. Lots were sold and yielded \$319,513.00. One lot was bought by Andrew Jackson, another by ex-President James Monroe.¹⁷

The property of the Cypress Land Company was divided into 408 shares. The costs of advertising, surveying, and registering was to be born by the trustees who were to receive five per cent of sales and land rentals. At the end of five years, all unsold land was to be auctioned. Trustees were LeRoy Pope, Thomas Bibb, James Jackson, John Childress, John Coffee, Darby Morris and John McKinley.¹⁸

The trustees had chosen well. Florence was strategically located to become an entrepot for the upper Tennessee basin. Roads, and probably canals, could connect with Tuscaloosa on the Black Warrior and Cotton Gin Port on the Tombigbee. The river turned north to carry cotton to Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio and bring back manufactured goods.¹⁹

The climate of the area was delightful, the scenery beautiful, and the soil yielded good quality iron ore and stone surface coal. Numerous streams provided sites for mills and factories. Great expectations surrounded town planning. Squares were set aside for a college and a female seminary. Spaces were provided for a general market, a courthouse, a jail, a cemetery, and a "public walking ground".²⁰

Anne Royall, a Virginian who spent several years traveling in the Old Southwest, described Florence, ca. 1821:

Florence is the great emporium of the northern part of the state....It has a great state to its back, another in front and a noble river on all sides, the steamships pouring every necessary and every luxury in its lap. Its citizens, bold, enterprising, and industrious--much more so than any I have seen in the state.²¹

Mrs. Royall described the river itself as "upwards of five hundred yards wide" and reported that a large ferry worked by four horses could cross it in just a few minutes.²² The ferry mentioned was, no doubt, the one established in 1818 at the end of Court Street, near the mouth of Cypress Creek. The Cypress Land Company owned the ferry on the north side of the river.²³

Florence grew rapidly and was incorporated in 1826. By 1820 a handsome courthouse had been constructed. Several brick warehouses were built along the river and approximately 100 frame houses graced the town. A newspaper, the Florence Gazette was founded and was published for many years.²⁴ The editor was William S. Fulton, a protege of Andrew Jackson who emigrated to Arkansas on appointment by Jackson as the last territorial governor. After Arkansas achieved statehood, he became one of the state's United States Senators.²⁵

During the 1830's and 1840's, the population of Lauderdale County expanded rapidly. In 1820 there were 4,351 inhabitants.²⁶ This figure included slaves (1,013). Census figures of 1830 revealed 11,781.²⁷ By 1840 the number of inhabitants had reached 14,485.²⁸ In 1850 the population of Florence was 5,124.²⁹ This period of rapid development was reflected in the establishment of several industries which included iron foundries and cotton and woolen mills. Unfortunately, these were destroyed during the Civil War.³⁰

It is believed that the first steamboat reached the shoals in 1821. In the following year, the Rocket made regular runs between Florence and the mouth of the Tennessee, there unloading goods to be transported to New Orleans and to towns on the Ohio.³¹ "Flush times"³² in the area and growing concern about the tendency of the steamboat companies to charge exorbitant rates led to interest in the development of railroads. Chartered in 1830 and completed by 1832, the Tuscumbia Railway was one of the first railroads in the United States. Just two miles long, it connected Tuscumbia and the site that later became Sheffield. As this line was completed, another was begun by the Tuscumbia, Courtland and Decatur Railroad Company. This facility was approximately 46 miles long and was built with planter initiative for the purpose of granting access around Muscle Shoals to the port of New Orleans. The line was not a financial success and was sold in 1847, merged with the Tuscumbia Railroad, and renamed the Tennessee Valley Railroad. These properties were absorbed eventually by the Memphis and Charleston Railroad Company, the firm which constructed the Tennessee River Railroad Bridge. After the Civil War, these roads became a part of the Southern Railway System.³³

As Florence and the Shoals area grew, the need to interconnect their transportation systems became apparent. Consequently, in 1840 a bridge to replace the ferry was built across the Tennessee. A tornado damaged it heavily in 1854, and

the flood of 1855 completed its destruction. Memphis and Charleston built the first railroad bridge in 1858 only to have it destroyed in the Civil War. After the war (1870) the bridge was rebuilt.³⁴

The opening of the bridge in 1858 was a momentous event. As it neared completion, Major James Deshler noted in his diary:

The great work is now accomplished, and our favored Tennessee Valley is fairly unlocked so that we have free and speedy access to the South Atlantic seaports on the one hand and to the "Father of Waters" on the other. Who will say we are not blessed?³⁵

The bridge benefitted not only the Shoals area but surrounding counties and states, especially Giles County, Tennessee. Farmers there then had an outlet for surpluses of horses, cattle, hogs and grain; and they supplied Shoals merchants with cheaper goods than could be obtained in St. Louis or Louisville.³⁶

Dynamic growth engendered interest in education. Beginning with the founding of LaGrange College in 1830, the first college in Alabama, the Shoals area continued to develop a superior system of higher education. LaGrange was located some distance from the city of Florence. The people of that city offered to furnish a large endowment and better buildings if the college would move there. The offer provoked a serious controversy among faculty, students and alumni. Nevertheless, in 1855 President Richard Rivers, most of the faculty, and a majority of the students moved to Florence. Some remained, however, and in 1857 the school became a military academy. It gained a reputation as the "West Point of the South", but the Civil War so depleted its ranks that it was forced to close its doors. In April, 1863, Federal troops burned the buildings to the ground.³⁷ Meanwhile the Florence school evolved into Florence Wesleyan University. The strictures of war closed this school also, but operations were resumed in 1866. In 1872 a "Class A" normal school was established on the foundations of Florence Wesleyan. The act which chartered the school was made contingent upon the gift of buildings by the board of trustees of Wesleyan.³⁸ Supported by the state of Alabama and small contributions from the Peabody Fund, it was successful from the start.³⁹ In 1929 the school became a four-year, fully accredited institution as Florence State Teachers' College.⁴⁰ It has subsequently gone through three more name changes: Florence State College (1957), Florence State University (1968), and the University of North Alabama (1974). Enrollment in the fall of 1989 was 5,610.⁴¹

Tuscumbia, the county seat of Colbert County, originally called Ococoposa, arose at the same time as Florence and experienced concomitant growth. The first settler came to the big spring in 1815. In 1820 the Alabama legislature incorporated the town.⁴² After 1824, an early newspaper, The Tuscumbian,

recorded the socio-economic growth of the community. Advertising in the Tuscumbian often announced arrival of loads of goods from Philadelphia. Surprisingly, there were many books and other luxury items.⁴³

Several nearby settlements, such as Bainbridge and South Port, enjoyed prosperity until the 1830's. But when the railroad was built, practically everyone moved to Tuscumbia in expectation of its becoming the great metropolis of the Southwest. The boom was temporary, and with the exception of York Bluff, Tuscumbia was the only one of the original towns to survive.⁴⁴

During the 1820's Tuscumbia provided academies for both male and female as well as schools for Indians on Bear and Caney Creeks. The crowning jewel, located in the countryside, was LaGrange (see above).

When the Civil War came, the martial enthusiasm of the young men of the Shoals thrust them into the Confederate Army faster than they could be equipped. In August of 1861 they rendezvoused at Courtland; and many left there to become a part of the Sixteenth Alabama, ranked among the South's finest fighting men.⁴⁵ Today a permanently organized reenactment group commemorates their valor.

Tuscumbia was devastated during the war. She lost most of her buildings and her public records.⁴⁶ During Reconstruction the city shared the tumult of her neighbors. Later she was to become famous as the home of Helen Keller.

Florence first experienced the Civil War through a Federal gunboat raid in early February, 1862. Henceforth until the end of the conflict in 1865, the town was occupied.⁴⁷

The Shoals area's river and railroad resources made it the target of Federal incursions. At the outset of the war, three railroads served the Tennessee Valley. The Memphis and Charleston, which served the Shoals, was considered the major railroad in the South. The M&C had been in regular operation since 1858, running through Chattanooga in Tennessee, Bridgeport, Stevenson, Scottsboro, Huntsville, Decatur, and Tuscumbia in Alabama, then through Corinth, Mississippi to Memphis.⁴⁸

The Memphis and Charleston was an invaluable resource during the early years of the Civil War. Troops were shuttled to the Battles of Shiloh and Corinth as well as to the general defense of Western Tennessee. When the line was captured by the union, then it became the duty of the Confederates to destroy the rails as fast as the Federals could replace them. Ironically some of the same individuals who had so avidly supported construction of the M&C found themselves tearing up the rails.⁴⁹ Despite Confederate efforts, however, the Union army, following its policy of cutting transportation links, burned many bridges and

trestles, the bridge at Florence among them.⁵⁰

Lauderdale County suffered from terrorism and violence during the early years of Reconstruction. The area was, no doubt, inflamed by the proximity of Federal troops and an active Ku Klux Klan. An alarmed Republican complained to Governor William Smith that, "Terrorism and anarchy reins [sic.] in this county." Smith refrained, nonetheless, from imposing martial law. By 1871, as Democrats regained political initiative and the citizenry demanded an end to violence, order was restored and economic recovery began.⁵¹

With the end of Reconstruction and Federal bridling of the local press, several newspapers appeared in the Shoals area. One of these was the North Alabamian edited by Arthur H. Keller, son of David Keller who was associated with the first railroad built in Alabama. The former was the father of the yet to be world famous Helen Keller.⁵²

The 1870's brought the resurrection of Southern railroads. The Louisville and Nashville was chartered in Tennessee and Kentucky in 1850. During the Civil War, its management attempted neutrality, but the location of its tracks led to heavy damage. By an agreement of 1871, L&N purchased a 2 1/2 mile track between Sheffield and Tuscumbia (the Sheffield and Tuscumbia Railway).⁵³

Again the Shoals area attacked a pervasive navigational problem. A 36-mile long succession of reefs and shoals having a fall of 131 feet (Muscle Shoals) constituted the chief obstacle to navigation on the Tennessee. In 1828 Congress had granted 400,000 acres of land to Alabama, the proceeds to be used for improvement of the Shoals. Three canals were constructed, but the improved section was still so difficult and dangerous that it proved unfit for commercial use and soon fell into decay.⁵⁴ In the 1870's plans were revived for reconstruction of the canals. Colonel George W. Goethals, builder of the Panama Canal, was prominently involved in the project which was completed in 1890 at a cost of \$3,191,726.50. Within the next fifteen years, the country entered the electric age, and focus toward development of the Shoals shifted from transportation to the production of hydro-electric power.⁵⁵

Meanwhile a new city arose on the south side of the river opposite Florence. The first settlement on the present site of Sheffield was a French trading post. In 1816 Generals Jackson and Coffee forded the river at Florence and camped on the bluffs of the south side.⁵⁶ Jackson is said to have been so impressed with the site that he envisioned it as the future site of the nation's capital.⁵⁷ After fighting their Indian campaigns, they returned, bought the land and laid out a town called York Bluff. The town survived but failed to prosper.⁵⁸

In the fall of 1883, Alfred Moses, a banker from Montgomery, Alabama, came to York Bluff as a guest of Colonel Walter S. Gordon of Atlanta. Together with two citizens of Florence, W.B. Wood and George P. Keyes, they toured the land which had been optioned by Gordon and his brother. The aftermath of this visit was the incorporation of the Sheffield Land, Coal and Iron Company (December, 1883). Capital was secured from Montgomery and Atlanta. The following spring a land sale proved highly successful. Sheffield was a reality.⁵⁹

Horace Ware, founder of the Shelby Iron Works, was among those who foresaw the efficacy of Sheffield as a major site for iron production. He surmised that, while Birmingham was closer to raw materials, lower costs at Sheffield would make her competitive.⁶⁰ By 1888 there were five huge iron furnaces in Sheffield.⁶¹ A map of 1884 shows the area along the river marked by furnaces with other business and residential lots laid out in a regular grid pattern.⁶²

Between 1885 and the early 1890's, Sheffield shared in an Alabama industrial boom. Coal and iron operations were begun by Walter Moore and "Colonel" Ensley. Later these operations were taken over, eventually by the Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company and by Sloss-Sheffield.⁶³ Transportation improvements were made also. In July, 1904 the first electric streetcar made its way to Florence across the railroad portion of the Tennessee River Bridge. Thereafter, hourly service was established.⁶⁴

No sooner had Sheffield been founded than Florence, which had lain comatose since the Civil war, began to rise from the ashes. Spurred by the example of Sheffield, businessmen in Florence established many new firms, among them blast furnaces. The furnaces attracted other industries, and recovery was underway.⁶⁵

At the onset of World War I, the Muscle Shoals Hydro-Electric Power Company, a subsidiary of Alabama Power, was planning the development of vast power facilities at Muscle Shoals. But the war crisis and plans by the Federal government to build nitrate plants in the area prompted a shift in plans. After unsuccessful negotiations to agree upon a price from the government for pertinent properties, the company, in the interest of national security, donated sites for the plants. Then the government began construction of Wilson Dam to supply the necessary electricity for nitrate production.⁶⁶

Just as the nitrate plants were finished, the war ended leaving the facilities no longer needed. Henry Ford and Thomas A. Edison, realizing the potential of the area for the production of hydro-electric power and fertilizers, visited the site.⁶⁷ The result was a bid from Ford, entered in 1921, for the lease of government properties. A counterbid was made by Alabama Power Company. Comparisons of these offers were rife in the press.⁶⁸

The Ford bid was debated for two years in the House of Representatives before being approved.⁶⁹

When Ford's offer reached the Senate, it became the center of political and media controversy. In some instances Ford's motives were compared with those of the infamous Teapot Dome scandal participants. As a consequence, in 1924 he formally withdrew his offer.⁷⁰ Although a new town, Muscle Shoals, was incorporated on the strength of Ford's plans,⁷¹ the area lay idle until 1933. In that year Nitrate Plant No. 2 was transferred to TVA and became the National Fertilizer Development Center which researches and produces cheap fertilizers. For some years Plant No. 1 lay abandoned. Later it was utilized by Reynolds Metals company as an aluminum can factory.⁷²

Soon after the passage of the Tennessee Valley Authority Act in 1933, the construction of Wheeler Dam began.⁷³ The Alabama Power Company settled with TVA concerning transfer of title for this and other sites for a remuneration of \$29.67 per acre.⁷⁴ The attractively low electric rates which resulted from this development and the equalization of freight rates placed the region in a competitive position.⁷⁵ Reflective of the economic dynamism of the area was the O'Neal Memorial Bridge, built for automobile traffic and opened in 1939.⁷⁶

TVA improved the lot of much of the Tennessee Valley's population, but there was much to overcome. Poor whites, particularly, had for decades eked out a subsistence as sharecroppers, miners, and textile workers, and during the Great Depression shared the poverty of the state and region.⁷⁷

TVA provided the impetus after World War II for the building of new, expanding, and diversified industries. The Tennessee thus began to realize its full potential as a source of economic wealth. Largely unsubdued until the advent of TVA, it is now, of all the world's rivers, the "most deftly chained".⁷⁸

Florence became one of the fastest growing Alabama cities. In 1948 there were fifty industries in the city proper producing such items as metals, chemicals, stones, timber and millwork, meat products, medicines, wearing apparel, and fertilizers. The surrounding area was a leader in cotton and mineral production.⁷⁹ This prosperity continued for several decades, spilling over into the other cities of the Shoals and itself attracting new, and sometimes, unusual industries. Sheffield and Muscle Shoals, e.g., support a recording industry specializing in country music.

During the late 1970's and early 1980's, economic factors beyond local control resulted in the loss of some 3,500 jobs with the closing of some plants and the scaling down of work forces in others. The result was an unemployment rate more than twice the national average and visible evidence of recession. In reaction to this situation, in 1985 Vice-President of the University of

Alabama, Malcolm Portera, conducted a comprehensive study of the Shoals. He recommended that the six governing bodies of the counties and municipalities involved allocate \$100,000.00 over a five-year period. The product of this study was the chartering of the Shoals Industrial Development Authority in 1986.⁸⁰ TVA supported this study by preparing, as a recruitment tool, a detailed analysis of those industries⁸¹ best suited for and most likely to be attracted to the Shoals.

Partially as a result of the efforts of SIDA and TVA and partially because of its natural advantages, the Shoals seems positioned for future growth. With a combined population of 145,065 (1980 census), the area is served by two airlines, two railroads, two bus lines, six motor freight lines and highways I-65, U.S. 72, and Alabama 43.⁸²

During a recent two-year period, development of small industries has created some 1,500 new jobs.⁸³ Positions created through expansion from October, 1986 through December, 1987 were estimated at 915.⁸⁴ Through an arrangement of the Federal government and Boeing/Aerojet, erection of NASA's Yellow Creek facility near Iuka, Mississippi for the manufacture of the Space Shuttle's solid rocket motors is scheduled to begin soon. This project is expected to contribute significantly to an economic boom for the Shoals area.

NOTES

¹ Marie Bankhead Owen, The Story of Alabama, I (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1949), 29.

² Nina Leftwich, Two Hundred Years at Muscle Shoals: Being an Authentic History of Colbert County, 1700-1900 with Special Emphasis on the Stirring Events of the Early Times (Tuscumbia, Alabama: By the author, 1935), 11.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 12.

⁵ Ibid., 19.

⁶ Ibid., 27.

⁷ Ibid., 30.

⁸ George Moreland, "Historic City of Florence Unfolds Charm to Visitor", Commercial Appeal, 30 October, 1932. (section and page number not available).

⁹ This map is housed in the archive of the Collier Library and Computer Center at the University of North Alabama in Florence.

¹⁰ Pope's Tavern (Lambeth House): Florence's Oldest Structure, Built as a Stage Stop and Tavern in 1811 (Florence, Alabama: Florence Historical Board, n.d.), 1.

¹¹ Owen, Story of Alabama, I, 454.

¹² L.D. Miller, History of Alabama Adapted to the Use of Schools and for General Reading (Birmingham, Alabama: By the author, 1901), 337.

¹³ Owen, Story of Alabama, I, 454.

¹⁴ Nelle Bigbee, "Florence, Ruler of Huge Bustling Valley, She Boasts Rich Past and Bright Future," Birmingham News, 17 October, 1948, 25 (D).

¹⁵ Willis Brewer, Alabama: Her History Resources, War Record, and Public Men from 1540 to 1872 (Montgomery, Alabama: Barrett and Brown, 1872; reprint, Spartanburg, South Carolina: The Reprint Company, 1975), 296.

16 Other statistics affecting Florence: mean annual temperature, 60 degrees F; average annual rainfall, 50 inches; area in square miles, 21.7 (ca. 1973).

17 Owen, Story of Alabama, I, 455. There is some confusion among sources regarding the identity of purchasers as well as the number of lots. While Owen mentions only ex-President Monroe, Moreland lists only ex-President James Madison as a buyer (Moreland, "Historic City of Florence", 30 October, 1932). Other sources imply that Jackson bought several lots--and cheaply--as it was generally understood that no one would bid against the man who had made the land available. In later years, he bequeathed his Florence property to the children of John Coffee (Jill Knight Garrett, A History of Lauderdale County, Alabama (Columbia, Tennessee: River County Publications, 1964), 4.

18 Ibid., 23. James Jackson built the Forks of Cypress, one of the outstanding examples of antebellum architecture in Alabama. Built on a site near Florence reputed to have been the home of the legendary Cherokee chief, Doublehead. Several years were required for its construction. It was destroyed by fire in 1966. J.J. Mitchell, "Historic Homes in Florence and Lauderdale County", The Journal of Muscle Shoals History, 11 (1986): 19.

19 Albert Burton Moore, History of Alabama, (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: Alabama Bookstore, 1934), 84.

20 Ibid.

21 Anne Newport Royall, Letters from Alabama on Various Subjects: To Which is Added, an Appendix, Containing Remarks on Sundry Members of the 20th and 21st Congress, and Other High Characters, etc., etc., at the Seat of Government (Washington: n.p., 1830), 144-145; quoted in Lucille Griffith, History of Alabama, 1540-1900 as Recorded in Diaries, Letters and Papers of the Times (Northport, Alabama: Colonial Press, 1962), 223.

22 Ibid.

23 Lettwich, Two Hundred Years at Muscle Shoals, 79.

24 Owen, Story of Alabama, I, 455.

25 Moreland, "Historic City of Florence", 30 October, 1932.

26 "Alabama Census Returns, 1820, and an Abstract of Federal Census of Alabama in 1830". The Alabama Historical Quarterly (Fall 1944): reprint, n.p. Willo Publishing, n.p., 1960.

27 1830 Census-Alabama: Blount, Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Lauderdale, and Lawrence, Microfilm.

28 1840 Census-Alabama: Jackson and Lauderdale Microfilm.

²⁹This figure represents free inhabitants only and is reprinted in charts incorporated into a statistical and genealogical history of Florence. See Jill K. Garrett, A History of Florence, Alabama (Columbia, Tennessee: By the author, 1968).

³⁰Miller, History of Alabama, 337.

³¹Leftwich, Two Hundred Years at Muscle Shoals, 66.

³²For a penetrating and entertaining account of this period, see Joseph Baldwin, Flush Times in Alabama and Mississippi: A Series of Sketches (Americus, Georgia: Americus Book Co. 1853).

³³Moore, History of Alabama, 308, 309.

³⁴Owen, Story of Alabama, I, 455. For a descriptive and chronological history of the bridge, see Appendix ____.

³⁵James Deshler, Diary (27 March 1887); quoted in Leftwich, Two Hundred Years of Muscle Shoals, 80, 81.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Leftwich, Two Hundred Years of Muscle Shoals, 129-131.

³⁸Owen, Story of Alabama, I, 463, 464, 465.

³⁹Moore, History of Alabama, 555.

⁴⁰Owen, Story of Alabama, II, 467.

⁴¹This information was supplied by the staff of UNA.

⁴²Owen, Story of Alabama, I, 399, 400.

⁴³Leftwich, Two Hundred Years of Muscle Shoals, 56, 57.

⁴⁴Ibid., 42, 43.

⁴⁵Ibid., 171.

⁴⁶Owen, Story of Alabama, I, 400.

⁴⁷Miller, History of Alabama, 338.

⁴⁸Leroy McEntire, Jr. "The Development of Railroads in the Tennessee Valley of Alabama Since the Civil War", Journal of Muscle Shoals History, 12 (1988): 100, 101. The other two lines were the Nashville and Chattanooga and the Nashville and Decatur. Ibid.

⁴⁹Leftwich, Two Hundred Years of Muscle Shoals, 99.

⁵⁰ Miller, History of Alabama, 234. For an engaging account of how these Union depredations and others affected Tuscumbia and environs, see Leftwich, Two Hundred Years of Muscle Shoals, 167-212 passim. This account is based upon, and quotes freely from, many local diaries and other sources of the time.

⁵¹ Virginia Van der Veer Hamilton, Alabama: A Bicentennial History (New York: W.W. Norton, 1977), 46, 47. For a thorough account of the era, see Walter L. Fleming, Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1905; reprint, Gloucester, Massachusetts: Peter Smith, 1949).

⁵² Leftwich, Two Hundred Years of Muscle Shoals, 224.

⁵³ McEntire, "The Development of Railroads", 103, 104. A "Railroad and County map of Alabama" ca. 1878 (Geo. F. Cram, Engravers and Publishers, Chicago) showing lines after the Civil War is housed in the archives at the University of Alabama.

⁵⁴ Owen, Story of Alabama, I, 32, 33.

⁵⁵ Leftwich, Two Hundred Years of Muscle Shoals, 235.

⁵⁶ Owen, Story of Alabama, I, 399.

⁵⁷ "History of Colbert County" (Florence, Alabama: Chamber of Commerce of the Shoals, Inc., n.d.), 1.

⁵⁸ Owen. Story of Alabama, I, 399.

⁵⁹ Harold Damsgard, "Early Sheffield Personalities", 1 December 1984. Copy in scrapbooks of Faye Axford; Athens, Alabama.

⁶⁰ Ethel Armes, The Story of Coal and Iron in Alabama (Birmingham, Alabama: The Chamber of Commerce, 1910), 415.

⁶¹ "History of Colbert County", 1.

⁶² Sheffield: City on the Bluff, 1885-1985 (Sheffield, Alabama: Friends of Sheffield Public Library, 1985), 12.

⁶³ Hamilton, Alabama, 133.

⁶⁴ "Sheffield: City on the Bluff", 49. A photograph showing a "summer" streetcar crossing the railroad bridge shows a car designed with open sides to defeat the summer heat. As there were no guard rails, passengers sitting in the end seats would have a thrilling ride across the river. Ibid., 48.

⁶⁵ Armes, Coal and Iron, 417.

⁶⁶ Owen, Story of Alabama, I, 325.

⁶⁷Leslie Wright, "Henry Ford and Muscle Shoals", From Civil War to Civil Rights: Alabama, 1860-1960: An Anthology from the Alabama Review, ed. Sarah Woolfolk Wiggins (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1987), 298. A photograph of the two friends standing in the end of Ford's special train during this visit appears in Sheffield: City on the Bluff, 71.

⁶⁸Wright, "Henry Ford and Muscle Shoals", 298.

⁶⁹Richard Sheridan, "Thomas Alva Edison's Visit to Muscle Shoals", The Journal of Muscle Shoals History, 11 (1986), 130, 131. Ford and Edison were old friends, so it was only natural that Ford would seek Edison's opinion on the suitability of the nitrate plants for the manufacture of fertilizers. While on the visit he supported the idea enthusiastically; but when he testified before a Congressional committee on the subject, he was rather equivocal. His ambiguity may have contributed to the longevity of the debate. Ibid.

⁷⁰Wright, "Henry Ford and Muscle Shoals", 298.

⁷¹Owen, Story of Alabama, I, 399.

⁷²Sheridan, "Thomas A. Edison's Visit", 131.

⁷³For a comprehensive archaeological history of the area flooded by this dam, see William S. Webb, An Archaeological Survey of Wheeler Basin on the Tennessee River in North Alabama, Smithsonian Institution Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 112 (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1939).

⁷⁴Owen, Story of Alabama, I, 326, 327.

⁷⁵David E. Lilienthal, TVA. Democracy on the March (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), 211.

⁷⁶Owen, Story of Alabama, I, 290, 291.

⁷⁷Wayne Flynt, "Spindle, Mine and Mule: The Poor White Experience in Post-Civil War Alabama", in Wiggins, ed., From Civil War to Civil Rights: 377-411 passim. q.v. for a detailed analysis of these patterns of poverty.

⁷⁸Donald Davidson, The Tennessee: Vol. 1. The Old River: Frontier to Secession (New York: Rinehart and Co., Inc., 1946), 17.

⁷⁹Bigbee, "Florence, Ruler of Huge Bustling Valley", 17 October, 1948, 25 (D).

⁸⁰"Future Shoals: A Five-Year Economic Development Plan" (Florence, Alabama: Shoals Industrial Development Authority, n.d.), 2.

⁸¹Analysis of Industries for Shoals Area: Comparative Advantage, prepared by the Economic Analysis and Assistance Branch (Knoxville, Tennessee: Tennessee Valley Authority, 1986), 1-23 passim.

⁸²"Facts about the Shoals" (Florence, Alabama: Chamber of Commerce of the Shoals, Inc., n.d.)

⁸³"Future Shoals", 2.

⁸⁴"1887-1987 Expansions of Local Industries" (June 1988): 2.

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

TENNESSEE RIVER RAILROAD BRIDGE HAER No. ____

Location: Spanning Tennessee River at abandoned section of Alabama Highway 43 Florence, Alabama (Lauderdale County) and Sheffield, Alabama (Colbert County). 650 ft. east (upstream) of O'Neal Memorial Bridge.

Concrete abutment - south end of bridge, Colbert County, AL. U.S.G.S. Florence, AL quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator coordinates: 16.438910.3848690

Dates of Construction: 1858, 1870. Altered 1890, 1893, 1895, 1906, 1962.

Engineer: Not known.

Builders: 1858 - Memphis and Charleston Railroad
1869-1870 - Memphis and Charleston Railroad
1890 - Edgemoor Bridge Company (supplier of turnspan)
1893-1895 - (trusses supplied by Detroit Bridge and Iron Works)
1906 - Phoenix Bridge Company (suppliers of turning machinery and end bearings)

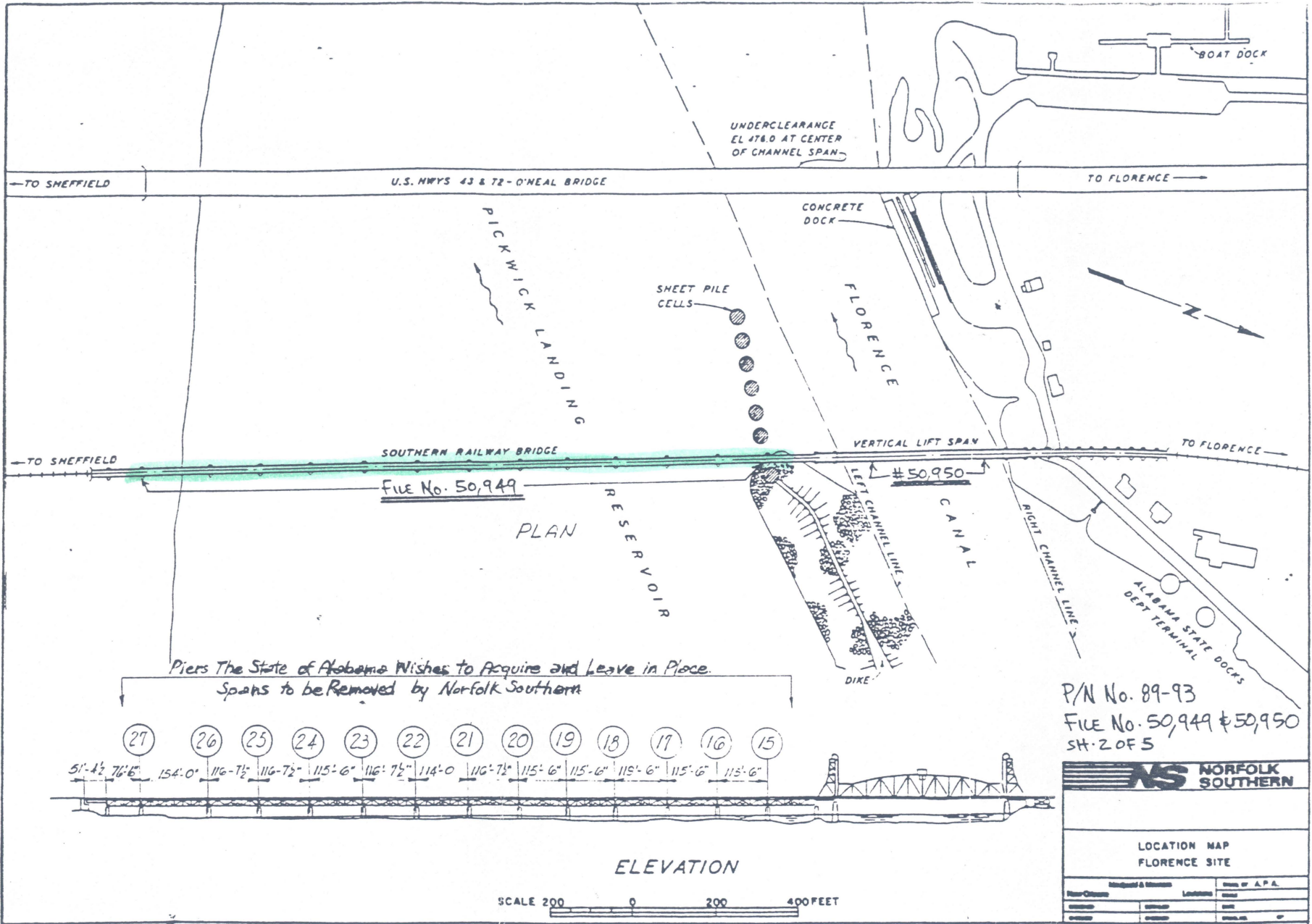
Present Owner: Norfolk Southern Corporation

Present Use: Abandoned - To be demolished ca. 1990

Significance: One of the oldest combination vehicular and railroad bridges in Alabama, the Tennessee River Railroad Bridge played a significant role in the early agricultural and industrial development of the Tennessee Valley and specifically of the Quad-City area (Florence, Tusculumbia, Sheffield, Muscle Shoals). During the early part of the Civil War, it was of primary importance in transporting Confederate troops to the Battles of Shiloh and Corinth to various points strategic to the defense of Western Tennessee. After the bridge was rebuilt in 1870, its use was instrumental in recovery from Reconstruction. After the 1930's, it contributed to the prosperity engendered by creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

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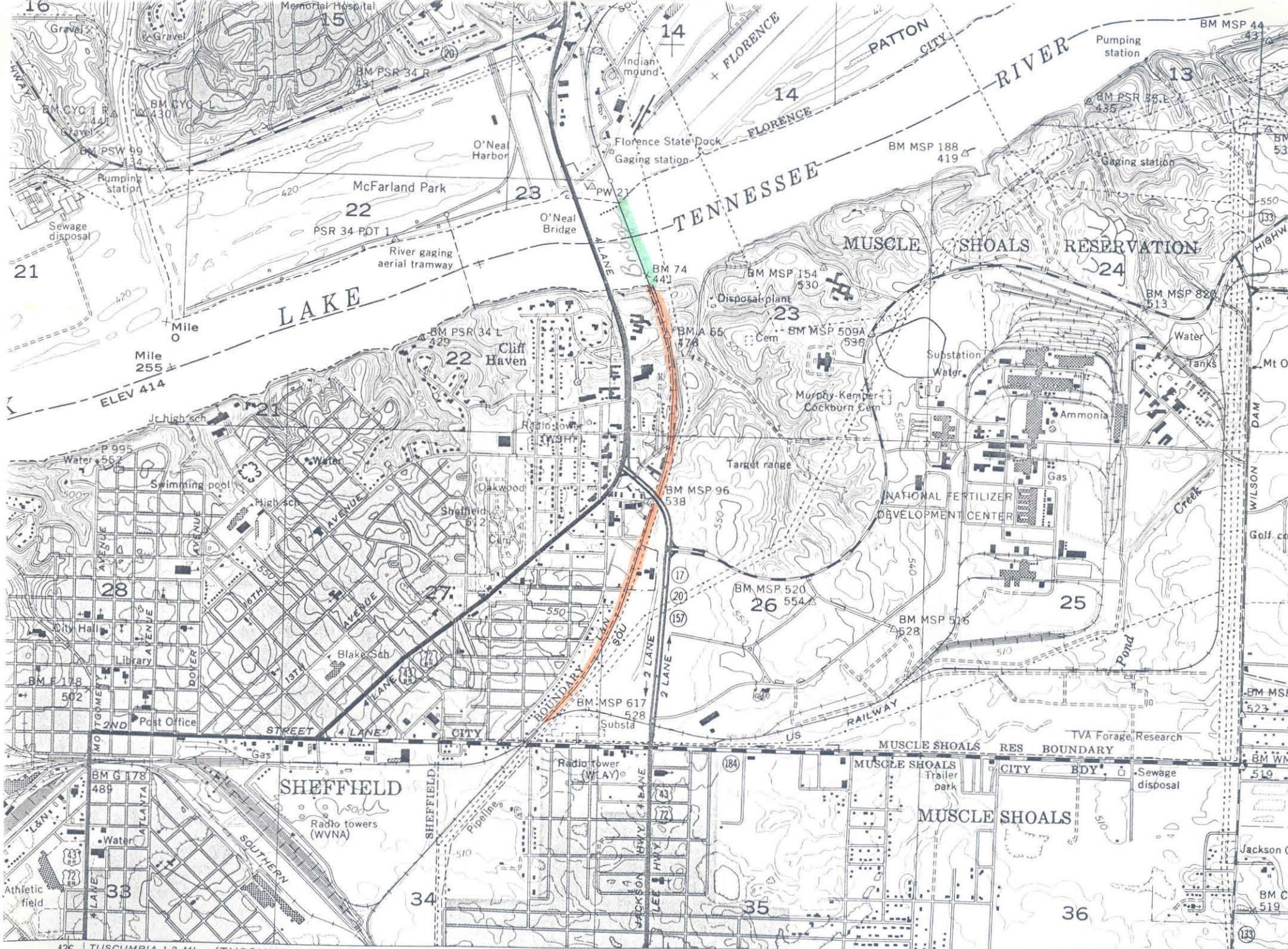
P/N No. 89-93
 File No. 50,949 & 50,950
 SH. 2 OF 5

NS NORFOLK SOUTHERN

LOCATION MAP
 FLORENCE SITE

Approval & Revision		State of A.P.A.
Drawn/Checked	Location	Date

FIGURE 4



36 TUSCUMBIA 1.3 MI. (TUSCUMBIA 45-NW) 3453 11 NW
 38 RUSSELLVILLE 19 MI. 40 439
 40
 41 R. 11 W. R. 10 W.
 3.4 MI. TO ALABAMA 20
 42000m.
 INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRG

SCALE 1:24000