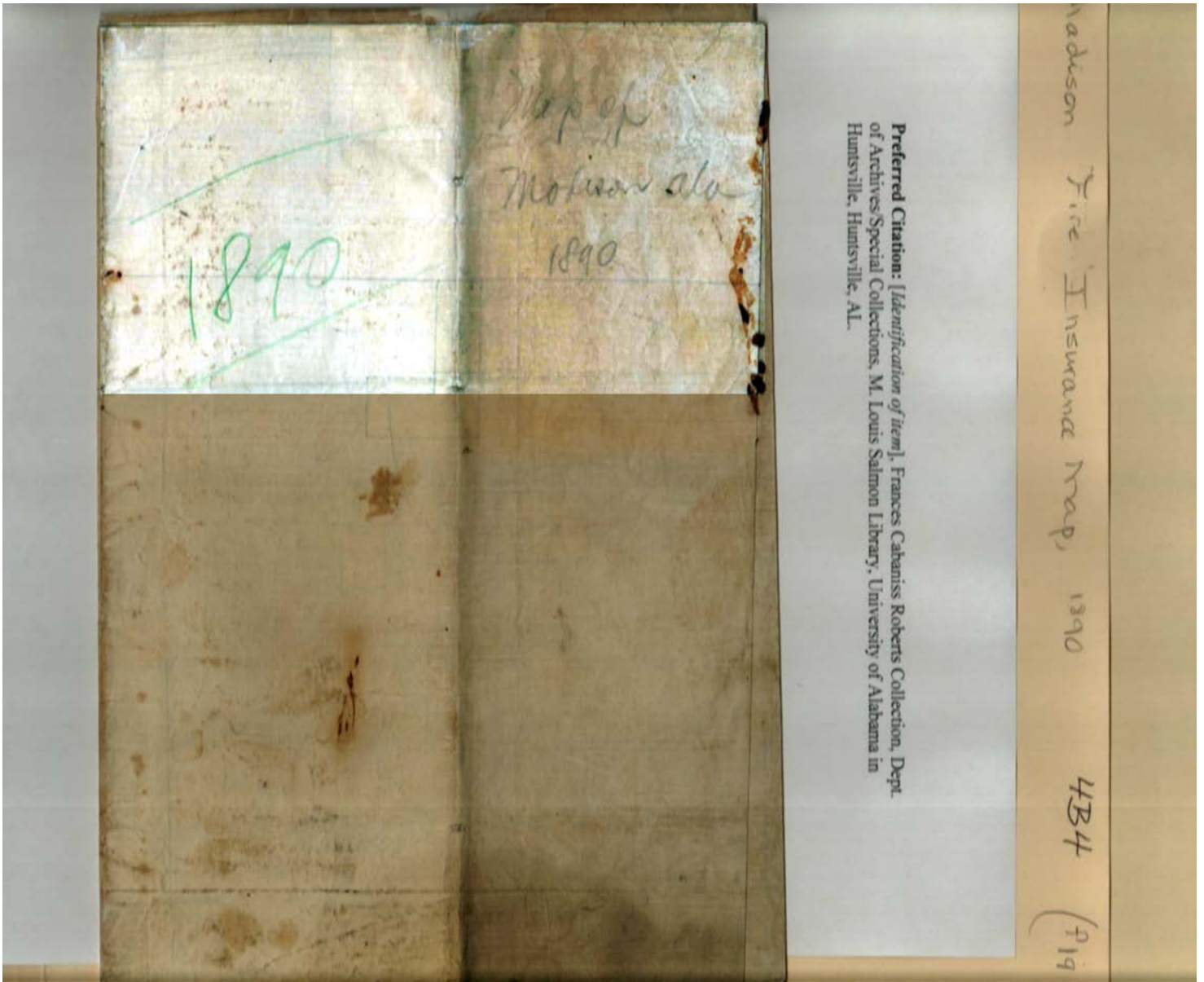


Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries B, Box 4, Folder 19

Madison Fire Insurance Map, 1890 - Madison County Communities

Image 1 r04b04-19-000-0096 [Contents](#) [Index](#) [About](#)



**Names:**

Fire Insurance Map

Map of Madison

1890

**Types:**

memo

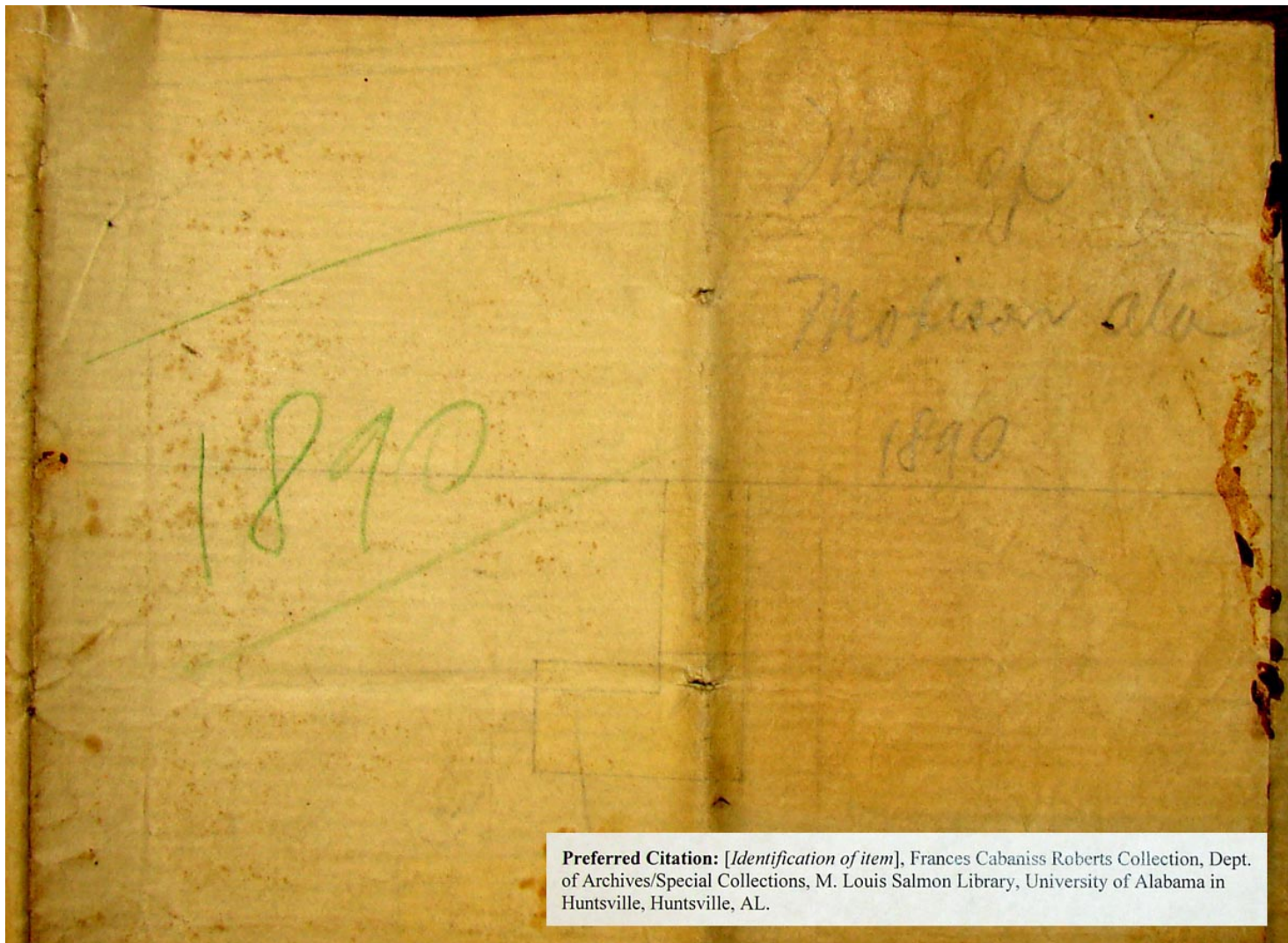
**Dates:**

1890

Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries B, Box 4, Folder 19

Madison Fire Insurance Map, 1890 - Madison County Communities

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**Preferred Citation:** *[Identification of item]*, Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection, Dept. of Archives/Special Collections, M. Louis Salmon Library, University of Alabama in Huntsville, Huntsville, AL.

**Names:**

Map of Madison  
1890

**Places:**

Madison, AL

**Types:**

memo

**Dates:**

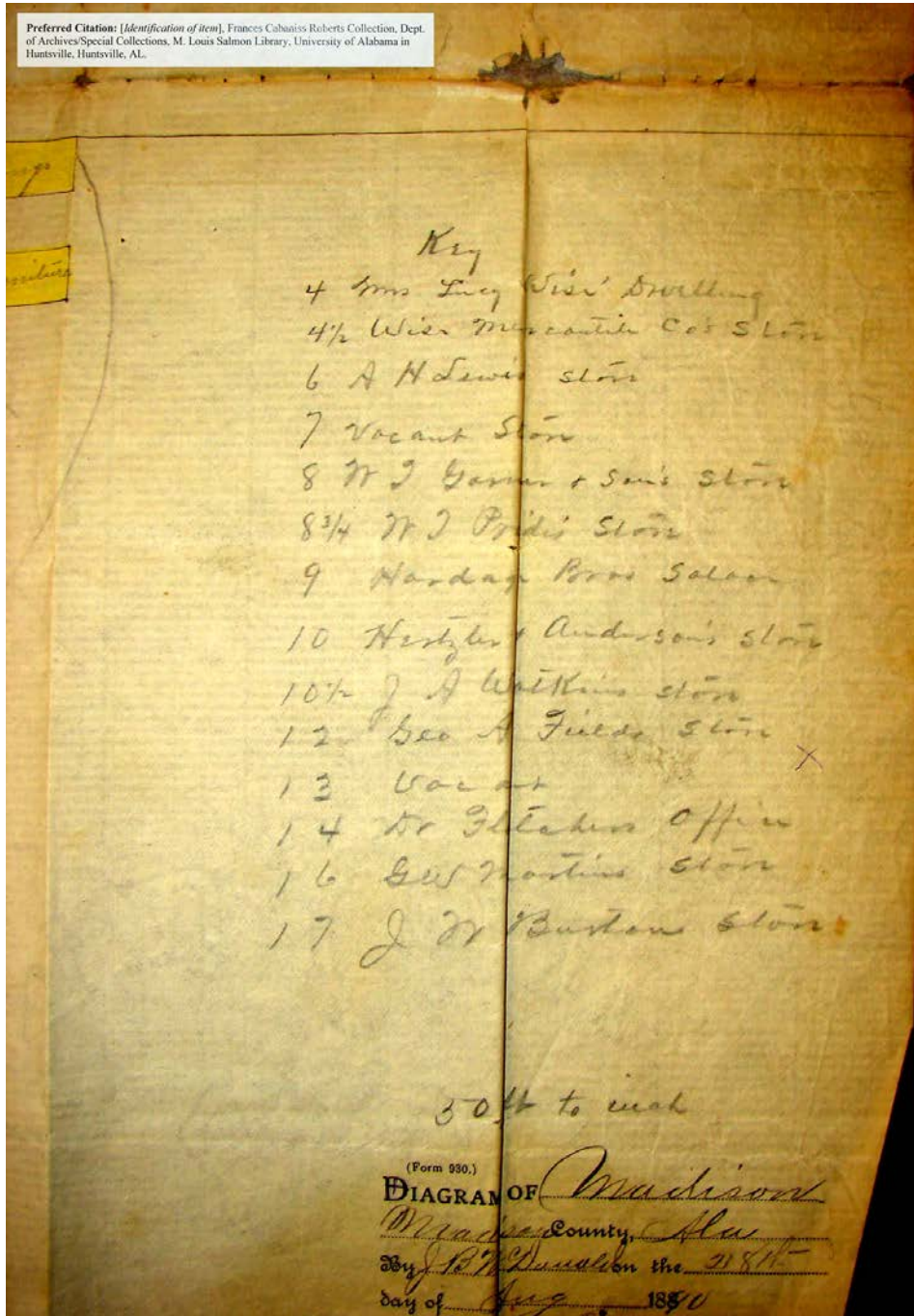
1890



Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries B, Box 4, Folder 19

Madison Fire Insurance Map, 1890 - Madison County Communities

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**Names:**

A. H. Lewis' Store  
Burton, J. W.  
Dr. Fletcher's Office  
Field, George A.  
Fletcher, Dr.  
G. W. Martin's Store  
Garner, W. J.

George A. Field's  
Store  
Hardage Bros. Saloon  
Hertzler & Anderson  
Store  
J. A. Watkins' Store  
J. W. Burton's Store

Lewis, A. H.  
Madison Buildings  
Martin, G. W.  
McDonald, J. B.  
Pride, W. J.  
Vacant Store

W. J. Garner & Son's  
Store  
W. J. Pride's Store  
Watkins, J. A.  
Wise Merchantile Co.  
Wise, Lucy, Mrs.

**Places:**

Madison, AL

**Types:**

list

**Dates:**

Aug 1890

Preferred Citation: [Identification of item], Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection, Dept. of Archives/Special Collections, M. Louis Salmon Library, University of Alabama in Huntsville, Huntsville, AL.

30 ft to each

(Form 930.)

DIAGRAM OF

Madison  
Madison County, Ala

By J. B. McDonald on the 28th

day of Aug 1890

Hartford Fire Insurance Co.

of Hartford Conn

H. S. Tiffany & Co., Insurance Publishers, Chicago, Ill.  
Dealers in Insurance Blanks and Books.

**Names:**

Hartford Fire  
Insurance Co.

**Places:**

Madison, AL

**Types:**

memo

**Dates:**

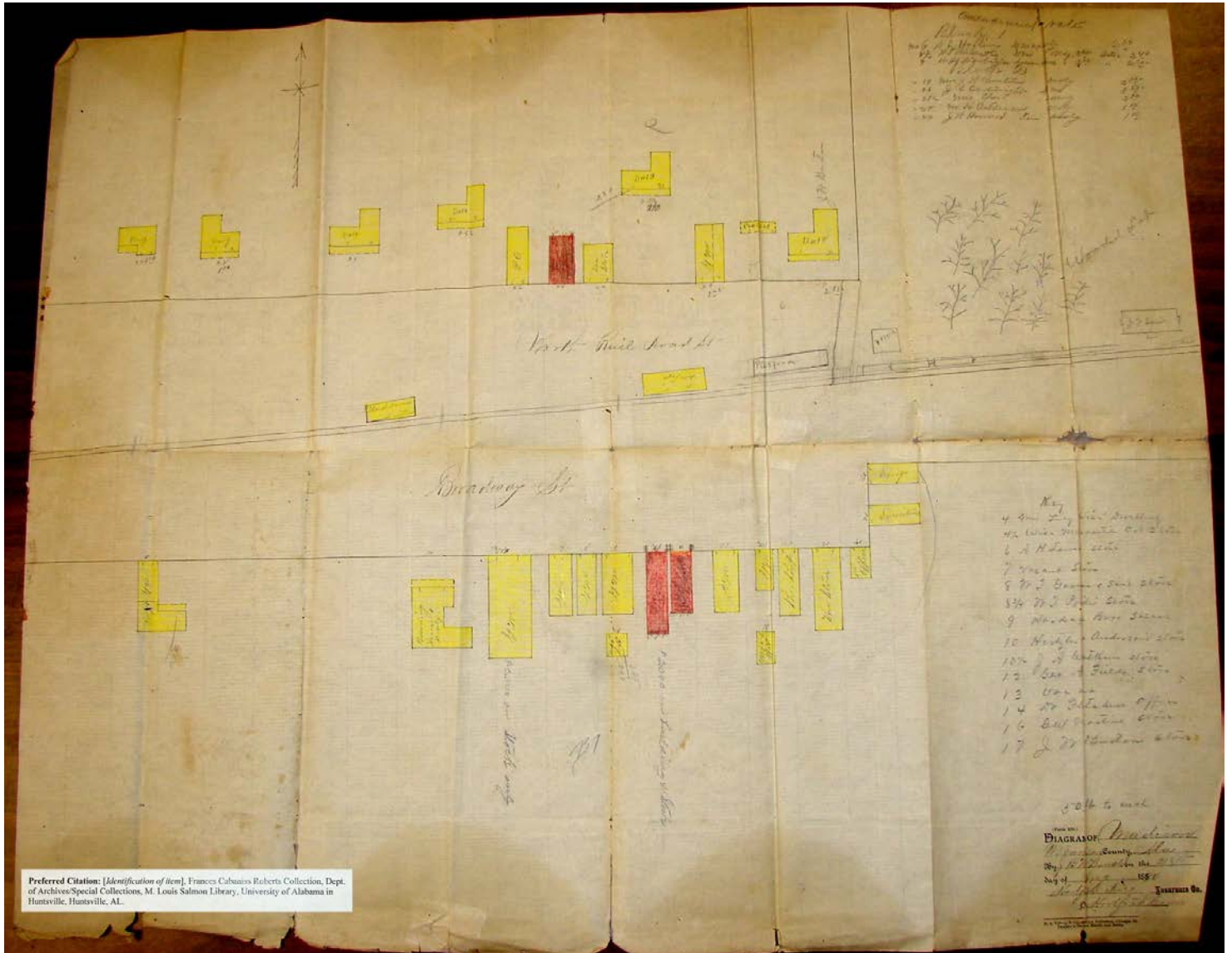
Aug 28, 1890



Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries B, Box 4, Folder 19

Madison Fire Insurance Map, 1890 - Madison County Communities

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**Names:**

Hartford Fire  
Insurance Co.

McDonald, J. B.

**Places:**

Madison, AL

**Types:**

map

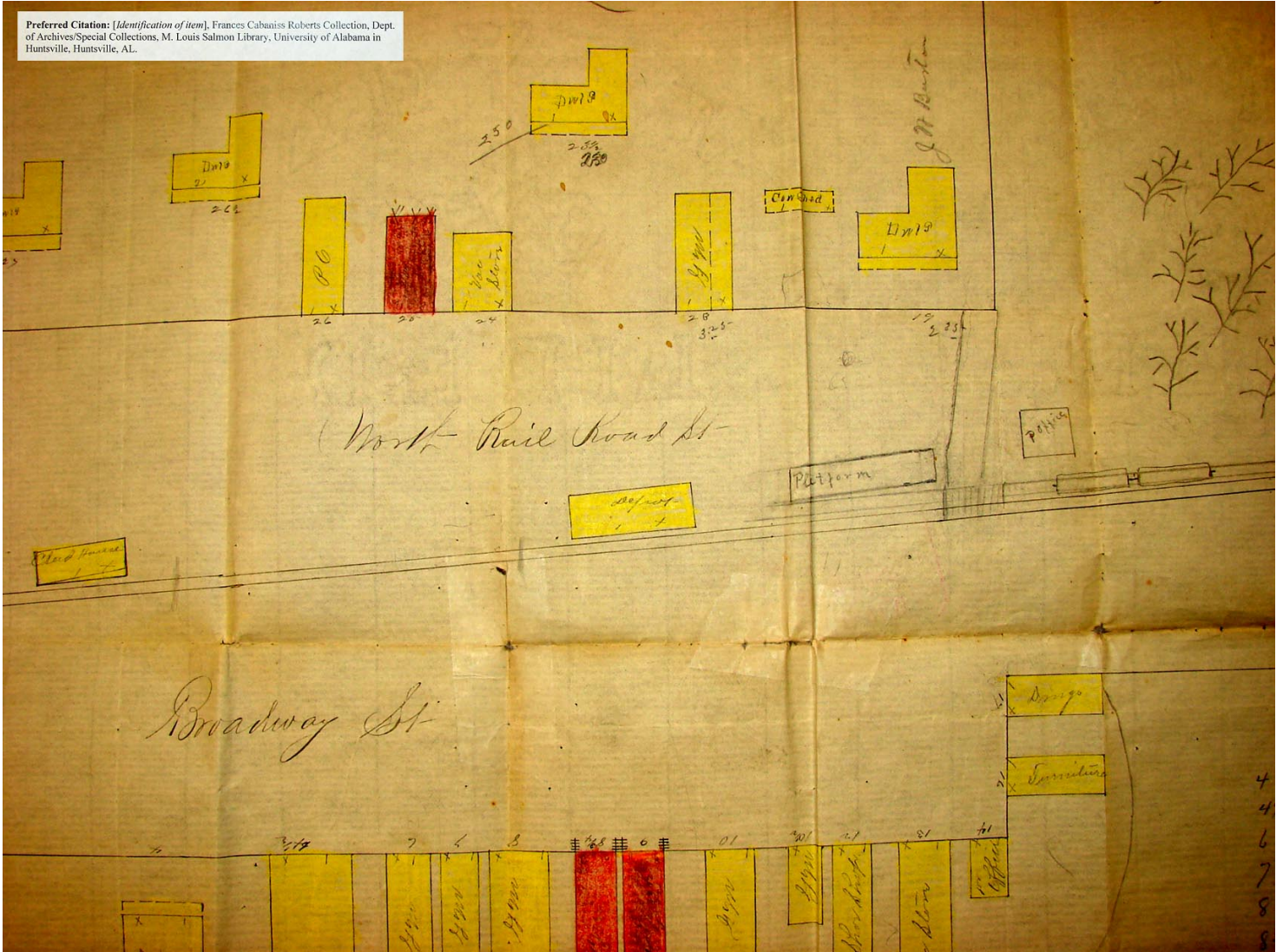
**Dates:**

Aug 28, 1890

Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries B, Box 4, Folder 19

Madison Fire Insurance Map, 1890 - Madison County Communities

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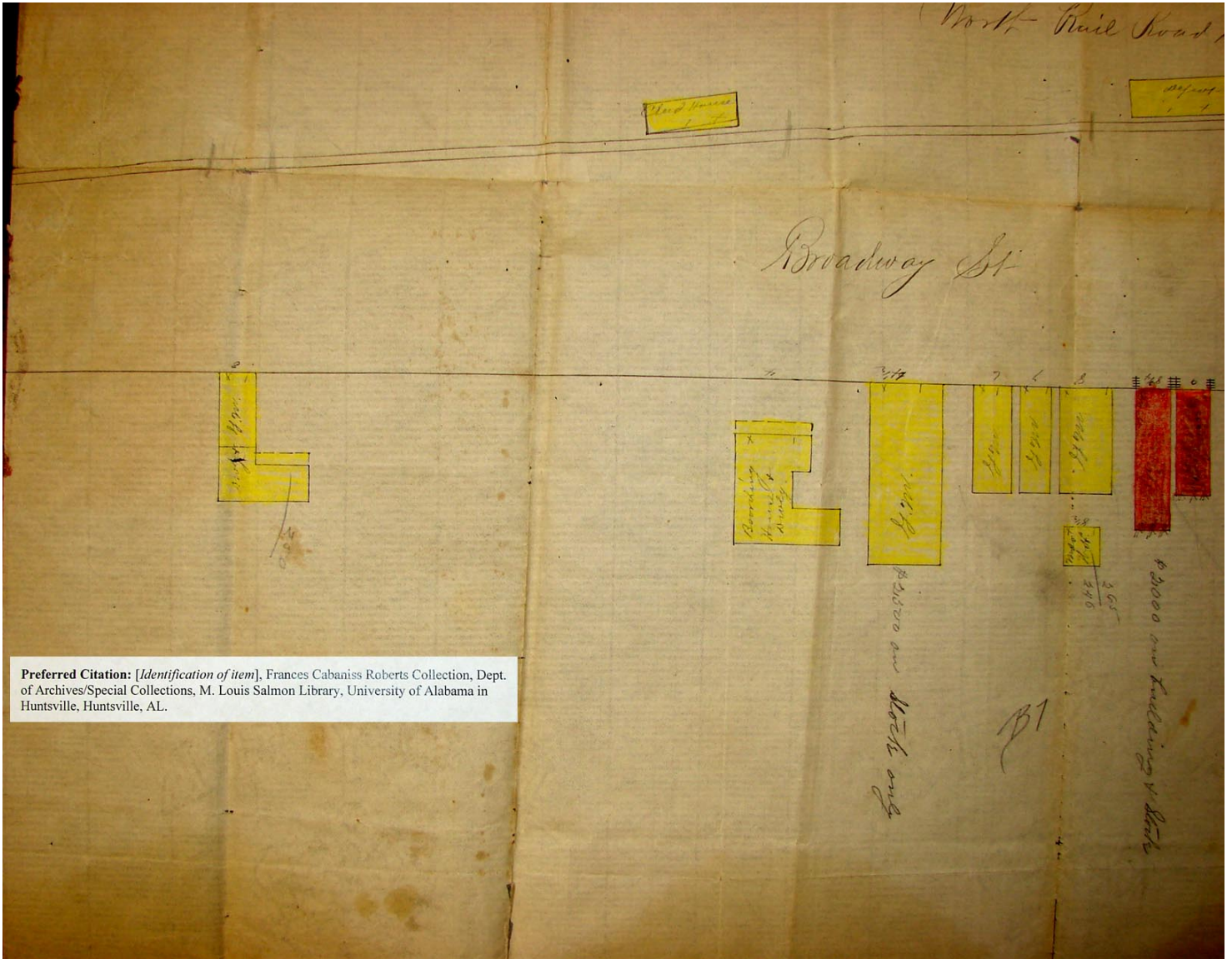
Places:

Madison, AL

Types:

map



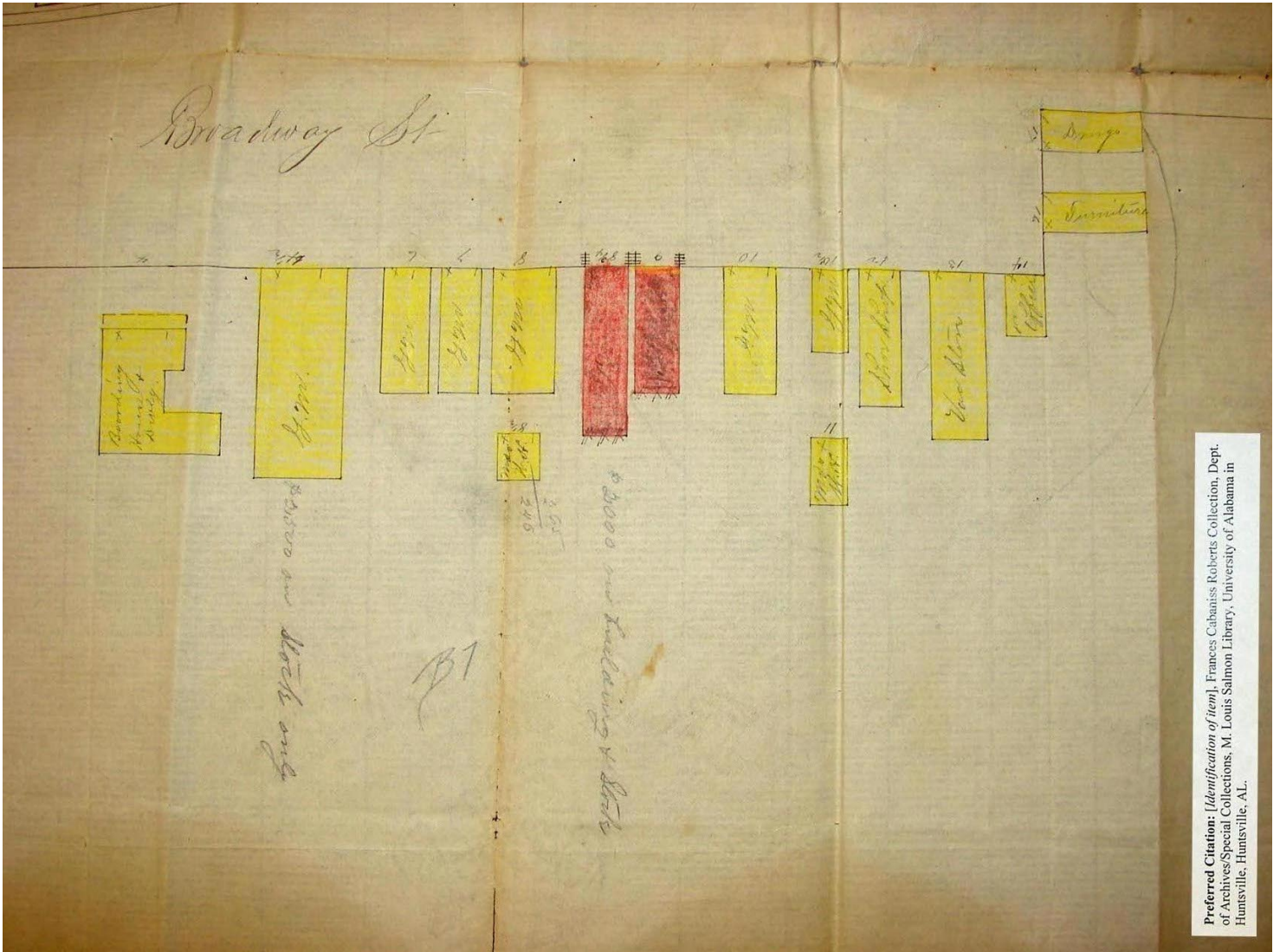


Preferred Citation: [Identification of item], Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection, Dept. of Archives/Special Collections, M. Louis Salmon Library, University of Alabama in Huntsville, Huntsville, AL.

**Places:**  
Madison, AL

**Types:**  
map





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**Places:**

Madison, AL

**Types:**

map





Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries B, Box 4, Folder 19

Madison Fire Insurance Map, 1890 - Madison County Communities

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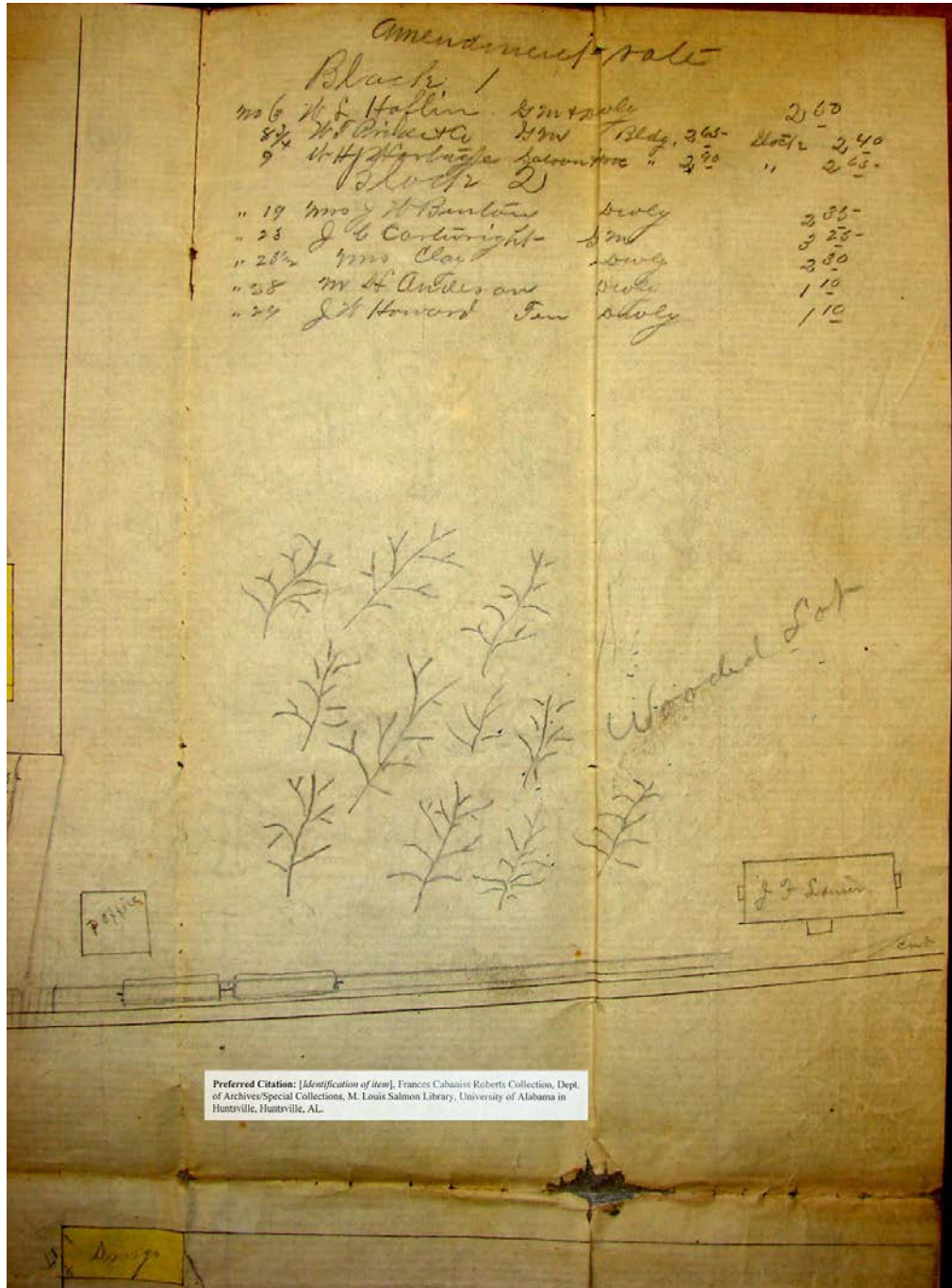


Places:

Madison, AL

Types:

map



Places:

Madison, AL

Types:

map



Hi Valerie,

I enjoyed John Rankin's article in this morning's (2/10/2010) Madison Spirit section of the Huntsville Times entitled, "Insurance Map Gives Detailed Look at 1890 Madison". Would you please pass on this note to him.

The insurance maps described in this article were quite common in the fire insurance industry from about 1850 to the 1970's, when they were replaced by computer technology. A company called the Sanborn Map Company consolidated this business in 1866. This company now produces digitized maps and software from its Colorado Springs headquarters. I used to use the large paper Sanborn maps when I was a young engineer in Philadelphia in the 60's. The Sanborn Map Company had people come to their customers' offices periodically to update their maps.

The colors of buildings on these maps denote the construction of the building (e.g. yellow for wood frame construction, red for brick, gray for metal, etc.). From these maps, a knowledgeable reader could determine the size, construction, occupancy, exposures and protection of properties.

John Rankin can contact me if he desires more information on this subject.

Joe Shelley

B. Joseph Shelley  
111 Barn Swallow Road  
Madison, AL 35758  
JShelMwood@aol.com  
256.683.4479

**Names:**

Green, Valerie  
Rankin, John

Rohr, Nancy  
Shelley, Joe

Limestone Spirit  
Madison Spirit

The Huntsville Times

**Places:**

Madison, AL

**Types:**

correspondence

**Dates:**

Feb 10, 2010

## MAP OF 1890 MADISON

(A Vintage Vignette by John P. Rankin, December 2, 2009)

The Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection in the Department of Archives Special Collections of the M. Louis Salmon Library at the University of Alabama in Huntsville includes a unique map of the town of Madison as it existed in 1890. Just how it came into the possession of Dr. Roberts is unknown, but she saved it for posterity. Now it shows us each structure along Madison's primary streets for a time when the census records are no longer available (destroyed by fire).

The map was sketched by J. B. McDonald on the 28<sup>th</sup> of August, 1890, for the Hartford Fire Insurance Company of Hartford, Connecticut. The notations on the map indicate that the Connecticut-based company insured at least ten of the thirty primary structures drawn on the map. Even the insurance premiums are noted on the map, but whether they were for a year or a month of coverage is not specified. The notations show premiums for houses and stores plus their stocks or inventories as ranging from \$1.10 to \$3.25 with coverage limits up to \$2,500. The legend of the map states that it was drawn to a scale of 50 feet to the inch. Details of shape ("footprints") and porches are included, apparently to scale.

What today is named Main Street on the maps is shown as Broadway Street. Today's Front Street is labeled as North Rail Road Street. Most of the primary structures on the map are colored yellow on the sepia background, but three of the primary structures are colored red. No obvious reason for the color change was found. A large (uncolored) platform along the railroad at the site of today's Veteran's Memorial Park is depicted, as is a small "post office" structure at the site of today's Animal Trax store. This location for a post office in Madison was previously unknown and not found in other old records. Further to the west along today's Front Street is a much larger structure labeled as "P O" or "P 6". It is assumed that the notation should be for "P. O." to denote a more recent and enlarged structure for the post office of 1890. A little further west, located on the north side of the railroad directly across from the old Clay House Museum is a structure sketch

### Names:

Animal Trax Store  
Hartford Fire  
Insurance Co.  
Map of 1890  
Madison

McDonald, J. B.  
Old Clay House  
Museum  
Rankin, John P.

Roberts, Frances  
Cabaniss  
Salmon, M. Louis  
UAH Salmon Library

Veteran's Memorial  
Park

### Places:

Madison, AL

### Types:

article

### Dates:

Dec 02, 2009



labeled as “C Seed House”, no doubt as a storage location for cottonseed from the several cotton gins located in and around the town.

The map shows detail including a “cow shed” between the houses that are now at 25 and 23 Front Street. Likewise, only trees are sketched behind the post office (Animal Trax location) as a “wooded lot” where the Brewer Cotton Gin was later constructed. Further to the east and on the north side of the railroad tracks is an uncolored structure diagram labeled as the dwelling of “J. F. Lanier”. Altogether, the map includes 30 structures labeled as dwellings or stores plus the two post offices, the depot, two warehouses, a doctor’s office in addition to the railroad platform, cow shed, and the cottonseed house.

Eight of the structures are labeled with the letters “G. M.”, which at first glance appeared to be the initials for George Martin. Eventually, it was determined that the letters stood for “General Mercantile” to describe the type of stores. The map also shows that Dr. Richard Matthew Fletcher had an office located at 210 Main Street, now the Bandito Burrito annex. The map depicts a furniture store at 212 Main Street. That furniture store was noted as owned in 1890 by G. W. Martin. The 206 Main Street location (later the D. T. Thomas store) was depicted as a shoe shop owned by George A. Fields. The rest of the stores on Main Street were pretty much as known from other historical sources, but what is now the Clay House Museum was in 1890 the home and boarding house of Mrs. Lucy Wise. Even in the nationally prosperous times of 1890, two of the Main Street stores and one on Front Street were noted as “Vacant”. Perhaps times have not changed so much in some respects.

**Names:**

Brewer Cotton Gin  
Fields, George A.

Fletcher, Richard  
Matthew, Dr.  
Lanier, J. F.

Martin, G. W.  
Martin, George  
Thomas, D. T.

Wise, Lucy, Mrs.

**Places:**

Madison, AL

**Types:**

article

**Dates:**

Dec 02, 2009

**Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries B, Box 4, Folder 19**  
**Madison Fire Insurance Map, 1890 - Madison County Communities**

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[Image 5](#) (r04b04-19-000-0050)

[Image 6](#) (r04b04-19-000-0060)

[Image 7](#) (r04b04-19-000-0070)

[Image 8](#) (r04b04-19-000-0080)

[Image 9](#) (r04b04-19-000-0090)

[Image 10](#) (r04b04-19-000-0100)

[Image 11](#) (r04b04-19-000-0110)

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[Image 14](#) (r04b04-19-000-0150)

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Hertzler & Anderson Store [3](#)  
J. A. Watkins' Store [3](#)  
J. W. Burton's Store [3](#)  
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Madison Spirit [12](#)  
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W. J. Garner & Son's Store [3](#)  
W. J. Pride's Store [3](#)  
Watkins, J. A. [3](#)  
Wise Merchantile Co. [3](#)  
Wise, Lucy, Mrs. [3](#), [14](#)

# Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection

**Preferred Citation:** Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection, Archives and Special Collections, M. Louis Salmon Library, University of Alabama in Huntsville, Huntsville, AL.

**Collection Scope and Content:** The Collection of 114 Linear ft. includes a total of 156 Archival Boxes. The Frances Cabaniss Roberts collection covers the historical records of the Cabaniss Roberts family. This collection contains extensive correspondence records of the Cabaniss Roberts family circa 1830 to 1930.

**Archives/Special Collections Access Restrictions:** None

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**Provenance:** Gift of Johanna Shields on October 28, 2006.



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE

**The UAH Archives and Special Collections  
M. Louis Salmon Library**