

ALABAMA'S CONSTITUTION HALL, 1819

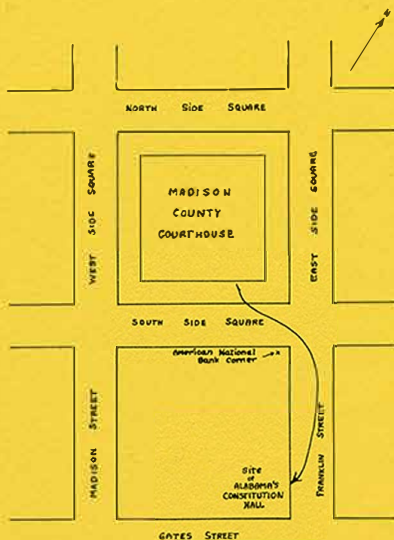
HUNTSVILLE



Artist's conception of the framed building at the northwest corner of Gates and Franklin Streets in Huntsville, where the Constitution to organize the State of Alabama was drafted.

The building that housed this historic meeting was often used as a theater during the years 1819 and 1820. In 1821, it was removed to make way for the building of a larger theater, which burned before construction was completed.

In 1969, the Huntsville Historical Society and the Alabama Historical Association erected on this site the marker shown above.



In commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the signing of Alabama's Constitution, the Huntsville Historical Society is sponsoring a movement to preserve this important site and to reconstruct on it the Constitution Hall and other historic buildings which stood in this immediate area in 1819.

Signatures of the Delegates who Drafted Alabama's Original Constitution
Signed in Huntsville August 2nd, 1819
courtesy
Madison County Board of Commissioners
on the occasion of
The 150th Anniversary Celebration, August 2nd, 1969

Done, in Convention, at Huntsville, this second day of August,
in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and nineteen,
and of American Independence, the forty fourth.

J. W. Walker,

President of the Convention,

and Representative from Madison County.

Washington County

~~Brant Dickerson~~

Henry Hitchcock

Tuscaloosa County.

Wm. Williams

Jno. L. Suddall

Lawrence County.

Arthur P. Hopkins

David Wright

Franklin County

William Metcalfe

Richard Ellis

Botetown County.

Thos. D. Crook

Melkijah Naughton

Clark County.

Rustin Saffold

James Magoffin

Chester County

Madison County

Clement C. Clag

John Leigh Townes

Henry Chambers

Samuel Mead

Henry Spiner

Gabriel Moore

John W. Taylor

Monroe County.

John Murphy

John Warrins

James Dickens

Thos. Wiggins

Blount County.

Isaac Browne

John Brown

Gabriel Hanby

Limestone County
Thomas A. Bibb
Beverly Hughes
Nicholas Davis
Shelby County
Geo. Phillips
Thomas Ann Rogers
Montgomery County
John Dandridge Bible
James M. Armstrong

Littlepage Sims
Concord County
Sam Cook
County of Dallas
William R. King
County of Menango
Washington Thomson.
County of Mission
John D. Terrell
County of Landulak
Hugh McWay
County of St. Clair
David Connor.
County of Antanga.
James Jacobson
County of Baldwin
Harry Toulmin
County of Allila
Hearrow

Attest

John Campbell
Secretary of The Convention

1819 CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE OF ALABAMA

Drafted during the Constitutional Convention which convened in Huntsville on July 5, 1819 to organize the State of Alabama. Adopted and signed on August 2, 1819 by the 44 delegates elected to the Convention from the 22 counties in Alabama Territory. The 22 counties in 1819 as shown on the original Constitution and the number of delegates from each county were:

Madison - 8, including the President of the Convention	Cotaco (now Morgan) - 2
Monroe - 4	Clark - 2
Blount - 3	Cahaba (now Bibb) - 1
Limestone - 3	Conecuh - 1
Shelby - 2	Dallas - 1
Montgomery - 2	Marengo - 1
Washington - 2	Marion - 1
Taskaloosa - 2	Lauderdale - 1
Lawrence - 2	St. Clair - 1
Franklin - 2	Autauga - 1
	Baldwin - 1
	Mobile - 1

On October 25, 1819 the First General Assembly (Legislature) of the State of Alabama convened in Huntsville, the temporary State Capital. Alabama's first Governor, William Wyatt Bibb, was inaugurated November 9, 1819 in the Madison County Courthouse. Congress declared Alabama the 22nd State on December 14, 1819. In 1861 the State of Alabama adopted a new Constitution, and at that time this 1819 document became obsolete. Other State Constitutions were adopted in 1865, 1868, 1875 and 1901. The State of Alabama currently operates under the Constitution of 1901. (Document on loan from the Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama)

(The above information is displayed with the Constitution)

Alabama's original Constitution has been on display in the lobby of the Madison County Courthouse since May 1, 1969. Milo B. Howard, Director of the State of Alabama Department of Archives and History, personally transported the document to Huntsville in his car from its place of safe-keeping in Montgomery. "I could have asked for the State airplane to bring the original Alabama Constitution to Huntsville, but I reasoned that the document would be safer being transported in a car. If the plane had crashed the irreplaceable document would likely have been destroyed, but if it was in a car, even in the event of an accident in which I might lose my life, it is very probable that the document, protected by a metal container, would have survived," said Mr. Howard.

The Constitution was written by hand on sheets of sheepskin parchment which were overlapped, sealed with red sealing wax, then overlaced with blue grosgrain ribbon to form a continuous document about twenty feet in length. The handwriting is believed to be that of John Campbell, the Secretary of the 1819 Constitutional Convention, with the 44 delegates adding their own signatures at the end of the document.

Mrs. Burke S. Fisk and Mrs. Richard H. Gilliam, Jr. designed the Constitution display case which was made by Mr. John Castleberry, all of Huntsville. The case is made of pine, bathwood, and plywood with $\frac{1}{4}$ " plate glass on the top and sides, and is lined with dark blue cotton suede cloth. It was purposely designed to be low in front so that school children could easily view the document. The Constitution is displayed in Huntsville under the care of the Madison County Board of Commissioners as part of Alabama's Sesquicentennial Celebration.

DELEGATES TO THE ALABAMA CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION IN HUNTSVILLE
July 5, 1819-August 2, 1819

Names given in order of signatures on the original Constitution

MADISON COUNTY

J. W. Walker, President of the Convention
Clement C. Clay
John Leigh Townes
Henry Chambers
Lemuel Mead
Henry Minor
Gabriel Moore
John M. Taylor

MONROE COUNTY

John Murphy
John Watkins
James Pickens
Tho. Wiggins

BLOUNT COUNTY

Isaac Browne
John Brown
Gabriel Hanby

LIMESTONE COUNTY

Thomas Bibb
Beverley Hughes
Nicholas Davis

SHELBY COUNTY

Geo. Phillips
Thomas Amis Rogers

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

John Dandridge Bibb
James W. Armstrong

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Israel Pickens
Henry Hitchcock

TUSKALOOSA COUNTY

M. Duke Williams
Jno. L. Tindall

LAWRENCE COUNTY

Arthur F. Hopkins
Daniel Wright

FRANKLIN COUNTY

William Metcalfe
Richard Ellis

COTACO COUNTY (Now Morgan)

Thos. D. Crabb
Melkijah Vaughan

CLARK COUNTY

Reuben Saffold
James Magoffin

CAHABA COUNTY (Now Bibb)

Littlepage Sims

CONECUH COUNTY

Saml. Cook

DALLAS COUNTY

William R. King

MARENGO COUNTY

Washington Thomson

MARION COUNTY

John D. Terrell

LAUDERDALE COUNTY

Hugh McVay

ST. CLAIR COUNTY

David Connor

AUTAUGA COUNTY

James Jackson

BALDWIN COUNTY

Harry Toulmin

MOBILE COUNTY

S. H. Garrow

Secretary of the Convention

John Campbell

SALUTE TO THE ALABAMA FLAG: Flag of Alabama, I salute thee. To thee I pledge my allegiance, my service, and my life.

STATE SONG: The words of "Alabama," the State song were written by Miss Julia S. Tutwiler, a distinguished educator and humanitarian. It was first sung to an Austrian air but in 1931 through the interest of the Alabama Federation of Music Clubs, a tune written by Mrs. Edna Gockel Gussen, of Birmingham, was adopted by the Legislature as the official State song. The Bill was introduced by the Hon. Tyler Goodwin, of Montgomery, and was approved by Governor B. M. Miller.

The inspiration for writing the poem "Alabama" came to Miss Tutwiler after she returned to her native State from Germany where she had been studying new educational methods for girls and women. She found the people of Alabama greatly depressed due to Reconstruction conditions following the War Between the States. She recalled that in Germany patriotism was kept aflame by spirited songs. She thought that it would be helpful toward restoring the spirits of our own people to give them a new patriotic song; so she wrote a father-land song for us and called it "Alabama."

"ALABAMA"

1

Alabama, Alabama,
We will aye be true to thee,
From thy Southern shore where groweth,
By the sea thine orange tree.
To thy Northern vale where floweth
Deep and blue they Tennessee,
Alabama, Alabama,
We will aye be true to thee!

2

Broad the Stream whose name thou bearest;
Grand thy Bigbee rolls along;
Fair thy Coosa-Tallapoosa
Bold thy Warrior, dark and strong,
Goodlier than the land that Moses
Climbed lone Nebo's Mount to see,
Alabama, Alabama,
We will aye be true to thee!

3

From thy prairies broad and fertile,
Where thy snow-white cotton shines,
To the hills where coal and iron
Hide in thy exhaustless mines,
Strong-armed miners-sturdy farmers:
Loyal hearts what'er we be,
Alabama, Alabama,
We will aye be true to thee!

7

Little, little, can I give thee,
Alabama, mother mine;
But that little-hands, brain, spirit,
All I have and am are thine,
Take, O take the gift and giver,
Take and serve thy self with me,
Alabama, Alabama,
I will aye be true to thee!

4

From the quarries where the marble
White as that of Paros gleams
Waiting till thy sculptor's chisel,
Wake to life thy poet's dreams;
For not only wealth of nature,
Wealth of mind hast thou to fee,
Alabama, Alabama,
We will aye be true to thee!

5

Where the perfumed south wind whispers,
Thy magnolia groves among,
Softer than a mother's kisses,
Sweeter than a mother's song;
Where the golden jasmine trailing,
Wooes the treasure-laden bee,
Alabama, Alabama,
We will aye be true to thee!

6

Brave and pure thy men and women,
Better this than corn and wine,
Make us worthy, God in Heaven
Of this goodly land of Thine,
Hearts as open as our doorways,
Liberal hands and spirits free,
Alabama, Alabama,
We will aye be true to thee!

by Miss Julia S. Tutwiler.