

PH0691577

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED DEC 29 1976
DATE ENTERED AUG 18 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Coryell County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Public Square

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Gatesville

VICINITY OF

11

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Texas

048

Coryell

099

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

County of Coryell

STREET & NUMBER

Public Square

CITY, TOWN

Gatesville

VICINITY OF

STATE

Texas

76528

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Coryell County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Public Square

CITY, TOWN

Gatesville

STATE

Texas

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic Sites Inventory

DATE

1970

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Texas Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Austin

STATE
Texas

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Noted for the design of a number of Central Texas courthouses such as those in Hood, Denton, and Hill counties, architect W.C. Dodson modified the traditional cross-axial plan to allow the erection of a central tower in the Coryell County Courthouse. By moving the district courtroom to a position along side the tower rather one centered under it, he was able to extend masonry support walls to the ground and support a heavy structure--as opposed to a light wooden work supported on trusses over the court space.

The Coryell Temple of justice also marks something of a departure from yet another convention of Texas courthouse architecture in which entrances in four relatively uniform facades give equal prominence to each of the commercial blocks surrounding the square. In spite of the presence of entrances in each facade the dominant architectural treatment of the south side suggests one major entrance. The north side has secondary dominance and the east and west entrances, identical in composition, have tertiary importance. In later years the main street shifted to the north side of the square and the north entrance became predominant. The south portico has paired corner columns while the north has single columns; also the openings flanking the central arch are smaller on the north.

Among the most remarkable features of the building is the composition of the interior spaces. Two central corridors passing through the building intersect on right angles under a rotunda. Located in the corridor just inside the prominent south entrance, a wide stair leads to a wide second floor landing, thence onward to the center where the floor plan enlarges and encompasses the rotunda openings, providing an excellent progression of spaces terminating at the spacious district courtroom.

The form of this courtroom is the basis for a unique composition of forms. Built in oval form at the request of the county commissioners it is strongly expressed on the northeast and northwest with curved forms. On the north side of the building, the district judge's office and a circular stair are contained within separate towers located adjacent to a portico which is similar to but smaller than the south portico.

On the ground level, this oval form contains the county courtroom on the west side of a bisecting corridor, and sheriff's office and office of the county clerk on the north side. Typical of many courthouses, spaces for the grand jury and district clerk were located on the second level. The third story--the level of the district courtroom balcony--contained rooms for juries and office space.

Much of Dodson's work was Romanesque in character with elements of either The Second Empire or Classical style. The Coryell County Courthouse is of the latter type. Firmly based in the round arches

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CONTINUATION SHEET Coryell County ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

and rusticated masonry of the Romanesque, the most conspicuously designed features were, however, in the Italian Renaissance Revival style.

Massive Classical porticos, differing somewhat in scale and treatment, define the north and south entries. The south portico rises from a one story base of rusticated stone with arched entries in the lower level. Red sandstone columns in the Corinthian order carry pediments of white sandstone with the five pointed star of Texas inset in contrasting carved stone. Pavilions flanking the porticos terminate in pedestals which, at the north and south entrances, were to carry twin statues of Liberty and Justice. Only a single statue is extant at each entrance. The east and west entries are treated in a more subdued fashion with simple openings. At each corner a projecting pavilion carries a ribbed metal dome topped with a finial. Quarter circular bays join the north facade to these projecting features.

The east and west facades are dominated by twin towers flanking the sides of the entrances. As at the north and south entrances a stair leads to a center arched opening behind which is a shallow porch. On either side of this center access are narrow openings surmounted by Roman arches and containing short balustrades. On the ground level these and other arches with voussiors of white sandstone and archivolts of red sandstone contrast with window openings spanned by red sandstone lintels that are incorporated into a band girdling the structure. On the second floor both red and white sandstone lintels are employed. All of this contributed to a noteworthy picturesqueness and richness of effect. Throughout, string-courses of red sandstone are countered by corner pilasters with carved capitols. The composition is dominated by the central tower with its Classical orders and raised dome surmounted by an open bulfry. A broken entablature supported by Classical columns contributes to the richness of this crowning feature.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
___PREHISTORIC	___ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	___COMMUNITY PLANNING	___LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	___RELIGION
___1400-1499	___ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	___CONSERVATION	___LAW	___SCIENCE
___1500-1599	___AGRICULTURE	___ECONOMICS	___LITERATURE	___SCULPTURE
___1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	___EDUCATION	___MILITARY	___SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
___1700-1799	___ART	___ENGINEERING	___MUSIC	___THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	___COMMERCE	___EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	___PHILOSOPHY	___TRANSPORTATION
___1900-	___COMMUNICATIONS	___INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	___OTHER (SPECIFY)
		___INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1897-1898

BUILDER/ARCHITECT W.C. Dodson

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Coryell County Courthouse has local historical importance and regional architectural significance. It has been the center of governmental activities since its completion and continues to serve these functions. It was designed by a prominent Texas architect and has no counterpart in the state. Comprised of curved and rectangular forms, and incorporating a combination of Romanesque and Classical details, as well as polychromatic materials, the edifice is one of the most interesting and charming nineteenth-century courthouses in the Southwest.

Coryell County, named for James Coryell, an early explorer of the region, was organized in 1854. Gatesville, the county seat, grew up around Fort Gates, established in 1849 to protect settlers from marauding Indians. After the incorporation of the county, public business was for a time conducted from rented offices and commercial buildings. Land for a courthouse square was acquired and a one-story framed structure was constructed in 1865 on a corner presently occupied by a city filling station. In 1872, a two-story structure of native white limestone was erected on this property and served as a focus of county business for the next twenty five years. The second courthouse, built at a cost of \$11,000 had four rooms defined by intersecting main halls on the first floor with jury and courtrooms above.

On May 15, 1897, architect W.C. Dodson was commissioned to draw plans and specifications for a third courthouse at a contract price of three and half percent of the total building cost. The only stipulations imposed on the architect were that the building have a cupola on top with a Seth Thomas Clock and a bell of not less than 800 pounds, and that the building be roofed in metal with the dome on the cupola in clad copper. In addition, there were to be dual statues of Liberty and Justice at the north and south entrances.

On October 2, 1897, a hollow cornerstone was laid with full Masonic ritual. The stone was placed on the northeast corner of the building; its orientation was, in ceremonial usage, symbolic of light. It was positioned at the accompaniment of music and after suitable orations was sprinkled with corn, wine and oil, emblematic of plenty health and peace. It was blue-grey granite weighing 1,825 pounds. Among the inscriptions on its surface were the dates Anno Domini and

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Robinson, Willard B., Todd Webb, Texas Public Buildings of the Nineteenth Century, University of Texas, Austin 1974.
- Scott, Zelma, A History of Coryell County, Austin: Texas State Historical Society. 1975.
- Simmons, Fran E., History of Coryell County, Belton, Texas Coryell County New. 1936.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,4	6,1,8,8,50	3,4,7,8,25,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

U.S. 84 and Junction Texas 36

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Willard B. Robinson, Professor of Architecture

S. Elizabeth Sasser, Research Assistant 12/9/76

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Division of Architecture-Texas Tech University 806/742-2464

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

P.O. Box 4499

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Lubbock Texas

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 12/21/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
ATTEST: <u>Charles Adams</u>	DATE <u>8-18-77</u>
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	DATE <u>8-18-77</u>

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the Masonic Anno Lucis. Inside was a box of articles representative of the character of the period. Included were a photo of the old courthouse, two boxes of medicine, a copy of the Dallas Morning News an 1897 five-cent piece, a bottle of whiskey and a list of Women's Christian Temperance Union officers along with a Columbian half dollar and Masonic Lodge Bible.

The courthouse was completed on July 18, 1898, at a cost of \$73,649.69 by contractor Thomas Lovell. Constructed of native limestone and red sandstone, the blocks were cut to size at the quarry and hauled to the site by horse drawn wagons.

The courthouse today continues to serve its original function.

Property Coryell County Courthouse

State Texas

Working Number 12.29.76, 4800

Coryell
77001435

TECHNICAL
Photos 4
Maps 1

Existing appears incorrect 4.25.77

CONTROL

OK 12.30.76

HISTORIAN

Accept
LB Franklin
4.14.77

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

Accept
mg kuryz
4-7-77

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____
Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

Accept
Cole
4-25-77

BRANCH CHIEF

Turner
8.16.77

KEEPER

Wm
8/18/77

National Register Write-up _____ Send-back _____
Federal Register Entry 9.6.77 Re-submit _____

Entered AUG 18 1977

INT:2106-74



PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Coryell County Courthouse
Gatesville, Texas

Texas Historical Commission, 1970
THC

North elevation
Photo #1 of 4

DEC 29 1976

AUG 18 1977



PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Coryell County Courthouse
Gatesville, Texas

Texas Historical Commission, 1970
THC

South elevation
Photo #2 of 4

DEC 29 1976

AUG 18 1977



Coryell County Courthouse
Gatesville, Texas

Texas Historical Commission, 1970
Texas Historical Commission

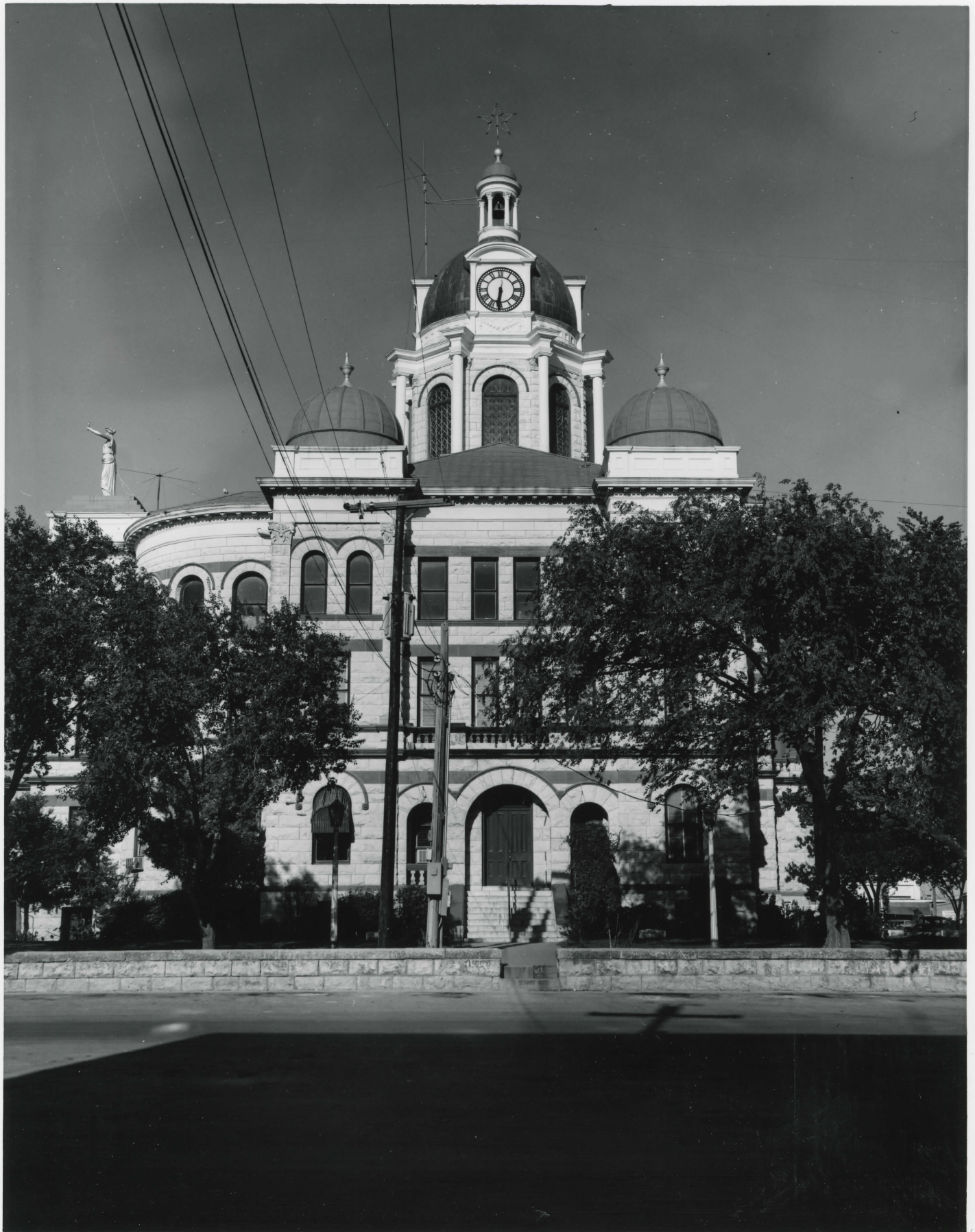
East elevation

Photo #3 of 4

DEC 29 1976

AUG 18 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Coryell County Courthouse
Gatesville, Texas

Texas Historical Commission, 1970
Texas Historical Commission

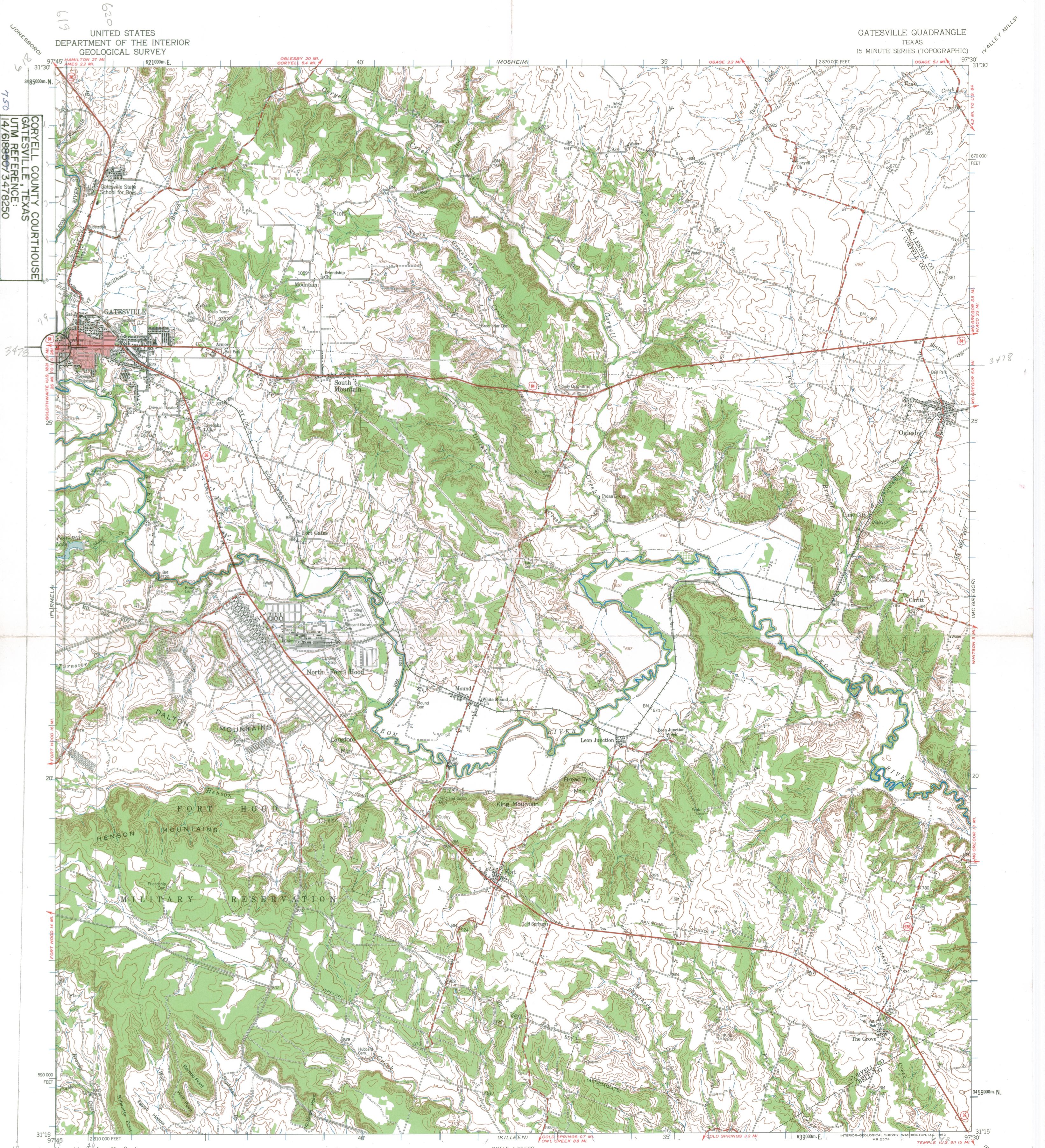
West elevation

Photo #4 of 4

DEC 29 1976

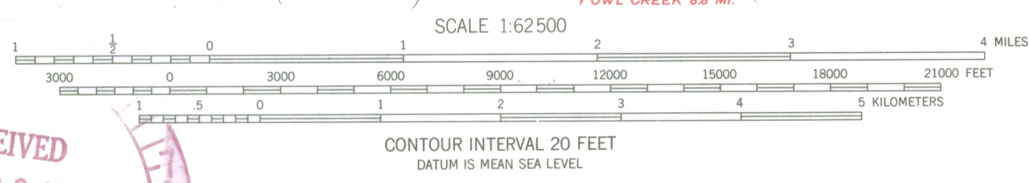
AUG 18 1977

CORYELL COUNTY COURTHOUSE
GATESVILLE, TEXAS
UTM REFERENCE:
14/618896/3478250



Mapped by the Army Map Service
Published for civil use by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USCGS and USCE
Compiled by the Army Map Service from Oglesby,
Gatesville East, North Fort Hood, and Leon Junction 7.5 minute
quadrangle maps, surveyed 1947, revised 1957-1958
Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods
Aerial photographs taken 1947. Field check 1947. Planimetric detail
revised from aerial photographs taken 1955-1956. Field check 1957-1958
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system,
central zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 14, shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

RECEIVED
DEC 29 1976
NATIONAL REGISTER
AUG 18 1977



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
U.S. Route ——— State Route ———



This area also covered by 7.5 minute, 1:24,000-scale maps:
Oglesby 1957, Gatesville East 1957, Leon Junction 1957,
and North Fort Hood 1958
GATESVILLE, TEX.
N3115-W9730/15
1958

3197-240

23

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE TEXAS

Date Entered AUG 18 1977

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
<u>Coryell County Courthouse</u>	Gatesville Coryell County
Erath County Courthouse	Stephenville Erath County
Old Victoria County Courthouse	Victoria Victoria County
Point Bolivar Lighthouse	Port Bolivar vicinity Galveston County
Val Verde County Courthouse and Jail	Del Rio Val Verde County
Galveston Seawall	Galveston Galveston County
Oliphant House	Milam vicinity Sabine County

Also Notified

Hon. John G. Tower
Hon. Lloyd Bentsen
Hon. W. R. Poage
Hon. Omar Burleson
Hon. John Young
Hon. Jack Brooks
Hon. Robert C. Krueger
Hon. Charles Wilson

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mr. Truett Latimer
Executive Director
Texas Historical Commission
P. O. Box 12276, Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711

Regional Director, Southwest Region

Mott

8/18/77

880

NR Data Sheet

DATE: 4-7-77
Reviewer INITIALS: MJL

NR / DOE AUG 18 1977

NAME AS IT APPEARS IN FEDERAL REGISTER: Coryell county Courthouse

OTHER NAMES: _____

LOCATION:

STREET & NUMBER Public Square

CITY, TOWN Gatesville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 11th

STATE Texas 48

VICINITY OF

COUNTY code

Coryell 099

OWNER OF PROPERTY: (Circle) PRIVATE STATE LOCAL GOV'T MUNICIPAL COUNTY OTHER

ADMINISTRATOR (underline)

FEDERAL (AGENCY NAME):

NPS REGION: (CIRCLE) N. ATLANTIC MID ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST MIDWEST

SOUTHWEST ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST PACIFIC NORTHWEST

FEATURES:

<u>INTERIOR</u>	<u>EXTERIOR</u>	<u>ENVIRONS</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Substantially intact-1	<input type="checkbox"/> Substantially intact-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Substantially intact-3
<input type="checkbox"/> unknown - 4	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown - 5	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown - 6
<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable - 7	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable - 8	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable - 9

Interior, exterior, environs not intact-0

CONDITION - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED	<input type="checkbox"/> Reconstructed	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexcavated	<input type="checkbox"/> Excavated	

ACCESS - Yes-restricted Yes-unrestricted No access Unknown

historic district? YES NO

WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? YES NO
IF YES, NAME:

WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK? YES NO
IF YES, NAME:

ADAPTIVE USE: YES NO Saved? YES NO

FUNCTION(S): (use vocabulary words)

then- Courthouse

now- Courthouse

SIGNIFICANCE:

<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW/Gov't/politics	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	<input type="checkbox"/> health
<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	<input type="checkbox"/> settlement
<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	<input type="checkbox"/> socio/cultural
<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY		<input type="checkbox"/> urban & commun
<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT		planning

Claims

"first" YES NO

"oldest" YES NO

"only" YES NO

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Eclectic (Richardsonian Romanesque, & Neo-Classical Revival,
Beaux-Arts Classical)

architect/m.builder: W. C. Dodson

engineer:

landscape/garden designer:

artist/artisan:

interior decorator:

builder/contractor: Thomas Lovell

ETHNIC GROUP:

NAMES:

personal

(label role
&
appropriate date)

events

institutional

DATES: DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (Specific date or 1/4 of century): 1897-1898

DATE(S) OF "MAJOR" ALTERATIONS:

HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT DATE(S):

SOURCE: (OF NOMINATION) PRIVATE STATE LOCAL GOV'T MUNICIPAL COUNTY

OTHER

FEDERAL AGENCY:

ACREAGE: (to nearest tenth of an acre)

COMMENTS: (include architectural information here)

2
5th Thomas Clock in tower

SIGNIFICANCE: (maximum two sentences)

3rd courthouse built to serve Crayell County; unusual ^{features} courthouse combinations of architectural style elements.