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National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form



This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

### A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic and Architectural Resources of Burton, Texas

### B. Associated Historic Contexts

Cotton Production in Rural Washington County, 1820-1941  
Burton: A Trade, Transportation, and Processing Focus of Western,  
Agrarian Washington County, 1870-1941

### C. Geographical Data

1989 corporate limits of Burton, Washington County, Texas

See continuation sheet

### D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

*Curtis J. Funnell*

Signature of certifying official

April 30, 1991

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

*Antoinette Q. Bee*

Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

6/11/91

Date

**E. Statement of Historic Contexts**

Discuss each historic context listed in Section B.

See text which begins with Continuation Sheet E-1 for a full discussion of each historic context listed in Section B.

See continuation sheet

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Burton, Washington County, Texas

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### COTTON PRODUCTION IN RURAL WASHINGTON COUNTY, 1820-1941

#### INTRODUCTION

No crop played so important a role in the late 19th century economic development of Texas as cotton. In some parts of the state, notably the South High Plains, the crop is still of paramount importance and production there secures Texas a significant role in the nation's total annual output. Only Spindletop and the development of the oil industry in the 20th century can compare with the significance to the state of the cultivation of cotton.

Given the adaptability of the plant to the varied Texas soil, topography, and climatic conditions and decades-long dominance of the crop, it is not surprising that most counties in the state eventually participated in the cotton industry. By 1860, almost 40 years after Anglo-Americans entered southeast Texas, cotton was being cultivated in 101 counties. By 1880, 142 counties were host to the crop. Cotton cultivation existed in 200 counties by 1900, and 225 of the 254 organized counties in the state were achieving some economic benefit from the crop in 1925.

Carved out of the Southern Prairie region of southeast Texas, Washington County was among the first counties to raise cotton on a wide scale. Its role was significant in the establishment and development of the cotton industry during the antebellum era, as well as during Texas' late 19th century preeminence within the nation as a cotton producer. While Washington County farmers continued to focus on cultivating the crop during the early 20th century, the county's importance within the state's production began a gradual decline. After 1940, cotton increasingly lost its importance within the county as new economic forces overturned its 100-year hegemony.

This study is devoted to Washington County's role in the production of cotton between circa 1840 and 1940, and the resulting physical impact of its cultivation on cultural resources, with a focus on the western portion of the county. The study was funded by the Burton Heritage Society of Burton, Texas, and the Texas Historical Commission during the spring and summer of 1989.

#### PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAND

In southeast Texas, Washington County is approximately midway between Houston and Austin, the state capital. Incorporating 610 square miles, the county is bounded on the east by the Brazos River and on the north by the Yegua and Cedar Creeks. The

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county receives about 38 inches of rainfall annually, distributed evenly throughout its area, and is well drained by numerous creeks which supply water year round. Plentiful underground water was tapped well into the 20th century for domestic purposes. The surface of the county is gently rolling in the eastern portion; in the west near the town of Burton, it gives way to a more level surface identified as the "post oak flats". While timbered with live oak, pin oak, post oak, ash, elm, and pecan, the county is topographically well suited to agriculture. Soils range from heavy waxy clay through loam and sandy loam, to loamy sand and fine sand. Some of the most productive clay soils in Texas are said to be found in the county. In addition, the alluvial valleys of the Brazos River are of extraordinary fertility. Although its soil quality, topography and climate together have made the county equally suitable for many crops, cotton and corn were predominant between 1840 and 1940 (Meyer 1913:1045-1053; Texas Almanac 1925:358-359).

## ANTEBELLUM WASHINGTON COUNTY AND COTTON

Washington County was among the earliest areas of Texas to receive Anglo-American settlement. Sponsored by Stephen F. Austin as members of his first colony, individuals such as John P. Coles, Micajah Byrd, William S. Brown, Samuel Miller and others received large land grants near and within the present county boundaries (Bugbee 1897-98:108-115). These early Anglo-American immigrants were largely from the upland or lowland southern United States, they brought with them the agricultural practices and cultural traditions of those areas, and they spread out thinly over the land. Especially attractive to them and those who followed were the fertile "bottoms" of the Brazos River, the waterway defining the modern county boundary on the east. Also attractive were the northeastern and north central areas of the county.

In 1820, Moses Austin's petition requesting colonization rights in the state of Texas emphasized that agriculture, and especially cotton cultivation, would serve as the economic focus of the colony (Tarlton 1923:17-18). His son, Stephen F. Austin, anticipated that colonists would process the staple with equipment obtained through New Orleans, marketing it through the same port.

Jared Groce, an early colonist who arrived in Texas in 1821, exemplified Austin's vision. The proximity of his plantation to Washington County and his involvement in developing the Texas cotton industry warrant mention. Groce established a large plantation (67,000 acres) on the east side of the Brazos near present Hempstead, just east of the present Washington-Waller County line. By 1825, he had probably erected his cotton gin, one of the first in the state (Tarlton 1923:53-54). Not long thereafter he became involved in ownership

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of the first steamboat company in the state, helping to move the commodity to the New Orleans market. A few years later, his son Leonard is said to have constructed a commodities warehouse, renting storage space for cotton and other goods, and he is reported to have built a cotton oil press near Brenham (Texas Almanac 1968:350; Bureau of Business Research 1989:9-25). Through their involvement in crop cultivation, construction of processing plants, and development of transportation and warehousing facilities the Groces were instrumental in the embryonic stages of the diverse industries which would characterize the state's cotton culture in the 19th Century.

As other colonists filtered across the fertile land, they too engaged in cotton production; of necessity they also built cotton gins. Immigrating to Washington County in 1822, Nestor Clay is credited with having planted the first field of cotton in the county (Wallis 1930:180). The 1850s "Clay's Ginhouse", referenced in the Washington County Commissioners' Court Minutes (1855-1870:22), perhaps belonged to one of Clay's descendants who continued to operate the Washington County farm after Clay's death in 1835 (Webb 1952:I:358). Of the 1840s, John Washington Lockhart, who lived at the time in Chappell Hill and old Washington, says that "gin houses sprung up as if by magic" (Wallis 1930:198-199) in the Chappell Hill area. Immigration and gin houses were also occurring in the western portions of the county during this period. A late 1830s immigrant, A. R. Kerr, farmer and Methodist minister, arrived in 1839 and settled on 355 acres in west Washington County. Reverend Thomas R. Nunn also moved to the area in the late 1830s or early 1840s and began improving 640 acres just north of the townsite of Union Hill. About the same time, William B. McClellan reportedly constructed a gin near the future town of Burton (Avis 1985:314,352).

By 1842, the area's status as a cotton-producing region was known to outsiders. Although still only descriptive in nature, documentary evidence clarifies somewhat the region's early cotton development. In 1842, Washington, Brazoria, Ward (a judicial county), and Matagorda Counties were cited by a British agent as the four best cotton-growing regions in the state. The agent further reveals that the staple cultivated there was "a long and silky staple (that) would bring the highest price on the market" (Tarlton 1923:29). Annexation to the Union in 1846 would further enhance the area's appeal and bring increased settlement (Wallis 1930:199).

Political unrest in Germany in this period led to an influx of German immigrants to the area. Often coming from agricultural backgrounds, these immigrants engaged in cattle raising and cultivation of corn and cotton. They too constructed gins. In 1846, August Siebel settled on the LaBahia Prairie in the western portion of the county near Greenvine, where he built a gin. German brothers Heinrich and Martin Meyer immigrated to the area in 1846,

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purchasing, with others, 198 acres near present Winedale and constructing a gin by the mid-1860s (Avis 1985:312).

Census data from 1850 are among the first statistical data to occur concerning the county's cotton production; they succinctly reveal the area's status as a cotton producer within the state's early history. Ranking behind only Colorado County with 4,771 bales and Harrison County with 4,581 bales, Washington County's 1850 crop of 4,008 bales placed it third highest of 62 counties producing cotton in the state (Bureau of Business Research, "Cotton Production in Texas By Counties", n.d., n.p.). In addition, the concentration of slaves in the county that year (2,817), among the highest of any county in the state, helps to explain the county's 1850 yield.

During the 1840s and early 1850s, growers situated in inland locations like Washington County had two options for transporting their staple to Houston or Galveston. Those who lived near the Brazos River could transport via keel boat during some high water seasons of the year. However, because neither the river nor the keel boats were reliable a second better option existed, that of the teamster driving oxen-drawn wagons overland to Houston. According to J. W. Lockhart (Wallis 1930:198), teamsters were numerous and readily available for hire, charging 50 cents/100 pounds. Lockhart describes the trip as a two-week haul in good weather. A third, significant option for transportation developed in the county during the 1850s. In 1856, Washington County residents obtained a charter to build an east-west railway connecting them with Hempstead, at the time the terminus of the Houston and Texas Central Railway, and the Houston market beyond. Active in this endeavor were farmers in the Chappell Hill and Brenham areas. Contributing their slaves' labor to the project, farmers and stockmen took payment in railroad stock (Webb 1952:II:866). Between 1858 and 1860, 21 miles of track were constructed. The resulting Washington County Railroad made the county one of the first inland areas of the state to have rail access to coastal markets.

With the construction of the railroad, Washington and adjoining counties are said to have experienced another period of growth. Cotton and corn production accelerated, and the former brought good prices in Houston and Galveston (Wallis 1930:202). The Agricultural Schedule of the 1860 Census, records 1,400 farms in the county. Nearly every farmer raised cotton and corn, as well as maintaining a variety of livestock, including horses, mules, cattle, and hogs. They typically also raised hay, sweet potatoes, peas, and Irish potatoes, and a few raised sheep.

In 1860, on the eve of the Civil War, Washington County's cotton production surged by more than 500% over that of its 1850 level, to 23,221 bales. The number of bales of

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cotton produced ranged widely from five hundred 400-pound bales (by Asa Hoxey, a wealthy, prominent Anglo-American planter owning 80 slaves in 1860 and cultivating 1,075 acres of his 6,000 acre farm) to two 400-pound bales on five cultivated acres of a 20-acre farm. Production of even as many as 125 bales occurred with some frequency, as on C. B. Francis' 500-acre farm in the Evergreen area of western Washington County, but smaller farms generally produced well under 50 bales and often as few as 15. Nevertheless, production at this level placed the county among the highest producers of the state's expanding 101 cotton-producing counties (Bureau of Business Research, "Cotton Production in Texas By Counties", n.d., n.p.). The production increase was tied to the largest decennial population increase the county experienced in either the 19th or 20th centuries. The number of slaves likewise grew from 2,817 (Pennington 1915:35) to more than 8,000 in 1860 (Slave Schedule of 1860 Census), a nearly 300% increase.

Census figures also demonstrate that farmers tended to improve only a portion of their land. Of the average large (more than 265 acres) farm in the county in 1860, only 54.5 acres typically were cultivated. Despite this average size, farms ranged widely in acreage. The Chappell Hill area stands out as an area with larger farms, higher bale production, and a concentration of slaves (Slave and Agricultural Schedules, 1860 Census). Longpoint, Vinegrove, Gay Hill-Independence, and Brenham-Vinegrove areas in the central, north central and northwestern areas, on the other hand, recorded often lower bale production.

Thus the picture one gleans of farming in the county in 1860 is one predominated by cotton and corn production, combined with a moderate amount of gardening and livestock production. No manufacturing activity appears to have occurred in the county (Products of Industry Schedule, 1860 Census). More gins probably existed than indicated by the 1860 Products of Industry Schedule. Ginning services that were not commercially operated concerns, the type generally recorded by the census taker, were frequently provided on individual farms for neighbors lacking gin equipment. In the eastern portion of the county could be found larger farms, greater bale production achieved via slave labor, and especially rich soil. Nevertheless, smaller farms owned by Anglo-Americans and European, especially German, immigrants were dispersed through the county and played an important aggregate role county's 1860 ascendancy in cotton production in Texas.

## COTTON PRODUCTION IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Even though the Civil War and emancipation considerably disrupted cotton production in the old southeastern counties of the state where the slave-dependent culture had been introduced, Texas nevertheless

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experienced widespread expansion of the industry and a prodigious increase in bale production during the second half of the 19th century. From a leading position in the nation in the 1850s, Texas had become first as a cotton-growing state by the late 1880s. By the turn of the century it was producing more than a quarter of the entire U.S. crop and almost a quarter of the world crop. These production achievements were accomplished through two contemporaneous phenomena: the explosive growth of railroads in the state after the war and European immigration. Together the two are said to have made possible phenomenal growth in the extension of agriculture by providing the prospective farmer the ability to transport cheaply and rapidly his crops and produce to northeastern and European markets. With the railroad's extension in the early 1870s across east central and into north and west Texas, cotton cultivation likewise spread to those areas. By 1923, when Texas grew more than 40% of the nation's cotton crop and about 30% of the world crop, cotton culture had penetrated the South Plains around Lubbock and the Panhandle.

Washington County eventually would reflect the post-Civil War trend of strong growth in bale production; but the early post-war years witnessed a small decline in production and many farmers suffered economic setbacks. Varied economic arrangements between former slave owners and freedmen also characterized the era. Thomas Affleck, a Scottish immigrant horticulturalist immigrated to the Gay Hill area via Mississippi sometime between 1855 and 1860. His post-war experiences typify those of some former planters. Affleck established a well-organized plantation on 3,400 acres near Gay Hill. He built a large, 2-story house with a considerable array of auxiliary buildings, divided between household-related functions and working-area functions. Despite his pre-Civil War efforts to encourage agricultural diversification in the area, Affleck apparently was ill-prepared for the effects of the war; by 1865 his plantation was for sale (Affleck, 1986:n.p.).

B.F. Elliott farmed in the western portion of the county before the founding of Burton. He survived Reconstruction in part by executing labor contracts in 1866 and 1867 with former slaves whereby they received one-third of the cotton and corn produced on 200 acres. In return, Elliott provided shelter, clothing, provision, tools, teams, and access to a gin and baling house (Avis 1985:200; 1974:328). John W. Lockhart, former planter near Chappell Hill, also survived the immediate post-war period by resorting to a payment of a monthly \$5 labor fee to freedmen, of whom some were former slaves. Later Lockhart and others rented their farms to European immigrants, "Polanders", who settled in the area around Chappell Hill (Wallis 1930:23-39).

During the later 1860s and 1870s, securing laborers in some areas of the county continued to be difficult for the cotton farmer. Between 1865 and his death in 1868, Affleck and others living near the Guadalupe River attempted to import immigrants from Scotland to

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help rehabilitate the farms in an unsuccessful cooperative effort (Curlee 1932:311). Between 1871 and 1876, Chappell Hill farmers repeatedly engaged in similar efforts aimed at attracting German farmer immigrants and white Alabama, Georgia, and North Carolinians to the area. Circa 1871, Captain Morgan C. Lee of Chappell Hill brought some 200 North Carolinians to the area in a successful effort to settle white laborers. An 1871 solicitation in a local newspaper for farmers needing imported immigrants at \$50/head implies that he made more than one trip (Brenham Banner August 4, 1871; Texas Rural Almanac 1876:55).

As planters, farmers and freedmen adjusted variously to new economic systems of payment for services or sharecropping, German immigration to the area, stemmed temporarily during the war, quickly resumed. In 1866, the Washington County Clerk is said to have commented that 90 parcels of land totalling more than 10,000 acres had been sold to Germans in a six-month period. German immigrants' appearance in the county coincided with the fragmentation of the antebellum farms into smaller acreage for sale, sharecropping, or money rent (Jordan 1966:95; Schmidt 1949:3). The 81-mile extension of the Western Branch of the Houston & Texas Central Railroad in the early 1870s from Brenham to Austin also facilitated immigration and further dispersion of cotton farming through the western portion of the county.

During the second half of the 19th century, the county continued to be among the strongest cotton-producing counties in the state. In 1870, Washington County's 22,425 bales are reported as first in production among 105 counties in the state. A similar production in 1880 placed it fifth in the state of 142 counties. During peak years of 1890 and 1900 when 29,158 and 52,215 bales respectively were produced, the county's rank was still 10th and 12th of 178 and 200 producing counties (Bureau of Business Research, "Cotton Production in Texas By Counties", n.d., n.p.).

Farming practices were changing dramatically during this period. Whereas 1,400 farms were recorded in the county in 1860, the number reached 3,400 in 1880. This increase presumably was accompanied by a decline in farm size over the same period. Tenant farming was a common phenomenon. German immigrants, for example, often initially rented farms in order to accumulate the cash to purchase their own. Most farms listed in the 1880 Agricultural Schedule raised cotton and corn as the primary crops. Livestock included horses, cattle, and barnyard fowl, and eggs and butter were produced in quantity. Oxen appear to be less numerous than in 1860. Many farmers list 20 or fewer acres devoted to cotton production while eight to 15 acres devoted to corn production was not uncommon. Many farmers in western Washington County around Burton did not hire outside laborers to work their farms, perhaps relying largely on their families. Those who did hire outside help employed both white and black laborers (Agricultural Schedule of the 1880 Census).

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Urban-related developments in the county during the 1880s and 1890s wrought many changes on the landscape. Development patterns shifted in response to the extension of the railroad. Towns like Burton sprang up along its route in areas previously characterized by light settlement. Conversely, settlements at Union Hill and Washington-on-the-Brazos declined as their inhabitants gradually abandoned locations that the new rail line bypassed. Commercially operated cotton processing industries also emerged in locations accessible to the railroad. The cotton gin, for example, evolved from the privately operated concerns of the antebellum era to become the most common cotton-related business in the county's small towns in the late 19th century.

While only six of 36 industries listed in Washington County's 1870 Products of Industry Schedule were cotton gins, at least 33 gin/saw/grist mills operated in the county by 1880 (1880 Products of Industry Schedule). The 1884 Texas State Gazetteer and Business Directory suggests that gins had achieved widespread distribution in the county and that communities often supported more than one. Burton, with a population of 150 in 1884, reportedly had three gins. Gay Hill also had three gins, while Wesley farmers had access to only one. Greenvine's population of 300 and Independence's population of 500 each supported five gins, while Labahia's population of 250 had access to four gins.

The greatest variety of cotton-related businesses, however, existed in Brenham during the 1890s. With a population of several thousand in 1892, Brenham served as the county seat and functioned as an inland, regional shipping point. At least one compress, numerous gins, a gin manufacturer, a cotton seed oil mill, a cotton warehouse, as well as numerous cotton buyers and cotton weighers served the community by 1892 (Texas State Gazetteer 1892:265-269).

A grocer/cotton ginner and two combination general store/cotton buyers were among the businesses that capitalized on the cotton economy. Alliances between cotton processors and merchants or merchants and buyers were not uncommon elsewhere. Similar arrangements took place in Burton during the late 19th century and again on a somewhat expanded scale during the 1920s and 1930s. These enterprises exerted a competitive edge over individual ginners, merchants, or buyers by combining more than one function under one roof and/or ownership. Burton entrepreneurs Charles Bauer, Herman Knittel, John and Travis Burton, and J. A. Nisbet were among those who understood this principle.

### COTTON PRODUCTION IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

From a peak of more than 52,000 bales in 1900, Washington County experienced marked fluctuation during the early 20th century (Bureau of Business Research, "Cotton

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Production in Texas By Counties", n.d., n.p.). Nevertheless, a gradual decline in production and a steady decrease in acreage devoted to cotton cultivation occurred during the period, accelerating after 1930.

Washington County Production in Bales

1900	52,215	1926	36,807
1910	22,520	1930	13,378
1916	34,217	1936	11,804
1920	11,014	1946	9,845

(Figures compiled from Bureau of Business Research, "Cotton Production in Texas By Counties"; Agricultural Statistics; Texas Almanac 1961:232; 1968:647).

The county's cotton crop relative to two productive counties reveals its state-wide status during the period. Washington County's peak crop (1900) produced 52,215 bales, while its average annual crop between 1913 and 1925 generated 30,000 bales. By comparison, Williamson and Ellis Counties each produced over 100,000 bales in 1935 (Agricultural Statistics; Texas Almanac 1925:358-359; 1961:232). Thus the county's role in cotton production during the 20th century is not comparable to its ascendant antebellum and late 19th century status. Even so cotton remained the predominate agricultural endeavor and provided the principal source of income for most residents from 1900 to 1940.

While many farming practices changed during the early 20th century, continuity characterized some aspects of the county's agrarian face. According to census records, 4,158 farms existed in the county by 1925, a significant increase over the 3,400 reported in 1880. A typical farm included 83.7 acres, of which 45.3 acres were improved on average. Staple length of the varieties grown in the western area varied somewhat but was typically one inch.

Tenant, sharecropping, and standing renting agreements were common arrangements throughout the era. Between 1900 and 1940, the percentage of rental farms fluctuated mildly from a high of 64% in 1900 to a low of 51% in 1920. As late as 1940, 58.3% of farms in the county were not owner-operated (Agricultural Statistics; Department of Commerce 1947:372). It is probable that the substantial German population enhanced tenant farming in the county, both as a result of sheer numbers but also because of their preference to save for cash payment for farms rather than mortgaging property. Tenant farming may have been encouraged by other economic mechanisms as well: when families were large, they could

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work the farm(s) they owned and rent another. A typical and persistent 20th-century tenant practice was the one-year lease, a term that discouraged soil improvement measures on the part of the tenant because of the term's brevity (Dement, Jaster 9/7/89).

Western Washington County farm sizes conformed to the county average and were in part determined by the number of acres one family could manage. According to Burton residents, area farms were typically about 100 acres, of which 25 were devoted to cotton, 25 to corn, and 50 to pasture. The 25-acre farm could produce about 7-8 bales of cotton (Dement, Jaster 9/7/89).

Farmers of the early 20th century tended not to use fertilizer except that from the barnyard. The small farm also probably discouraged the introduction of mechanized equipment, because, in the words of one resident, "a fellow farming 25 acres (in cotton) didn't need a mechanized picker to help" (Dement 9/7/89). Few tractors are cited in the 1920 census. While their numbers increased in the 1930s, not until after World War II did farmers take a strong interest in the use of tractors. The mechanical picker or sledder also did not achieve widespread distribution, although the mechanical stripper was more common. Primitive hand harvesting techniques survived in the county well into the 1940s.

Based on the example of Burton, marketing the commodity locally evolved after 1920 into an important, coherent pattern involving cotton buyer and merchant. The pattern was reinforced in Burton by the existence of important additional facilities. Although numerous gins operated in the county during the period (several county residents collectively recall the names and locations of at least 24 gins as late as 1940), farmers typically did not want to haul cotton over poor roads for more than a few miles. The presence in Burton of the railroad and a warehouse were influential in attracting the farmer's trade. In one stop, cotton could be processed and stored in a dry, safe place while it awaited shipment to Houston, Galveston or St. Louis. Moreover, a proliferation of cotton buyers during the 1920s and 1930s facilitated sale of the crop in a competitive environment. Mercantile competition in Burton revolved around farmers and their crops, and cotton buying became an important business service. Although little profit could be made on cotton buying, most general stores in Burton had a cotton buyer on hand to service farmers who tended to shop for provisions wherever they sold their cotton. Often the owner himself or a relative served as buyer.

The decline of cotton in Washington County appears to have begun in the mid 1930s and proceeded haltingly for about 30 years. By 1966, only 6,020 bales were produced in marked contrast to the peak production of more than 52,000 bales in 1900. Reasons cited for the decline of its cultivation include the rise of cotton pests such as the leaf worm, or army worm, the pink boll worm, and root rot. Such pests reduced production to unprofitable

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levels. Low prices during the Depression considerably aggravated the impact of the pests and facilitated the decline. Farmers found that they could raise corn and cattle with fewer maintenance costs, and numerous producers turned their efforts to those endeavors. During the 1940s dairy farming in particular prospered in the county. Blackland farming in the county where an average of 38 inches of rain falls each year required significant labor; farmers usually had to work their entire fields several times each growing season (Dement 9/7/89). The high costs of mechanized equipment combined with the small sizes of farms inhibited the small farmer from realizing the economies of scale achieved by his large-scale competitor. Finally the real estate value of the land accelerated beyond its agricultural value. By the early 1960s, farming families were selling their land, often to buyers from nearby urban communities. Today it is reported that about 85% of the county is under absentee ownership (Neinast 12/13/89). Cotton production, restricted to the Chappell Hill bottoms, is insufficient to support even one operating cotton gin.

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### **BURTON: A TRADE, TRANSPORTATION, AND PROCESSING FOCUS OF WESTERN, AGRARIAN WASHINGTON COUNTY, 1870-1941**

#### INTRODUCTION

Burton, Texas, is a small rural community in western Washington County. Its founding and subsequent development in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were influenced by agriculture, especially the cultivation of cotton, the railroad, German immigration, and its role as regional trade center. Like similar towns in this rural county, Burton has remained small throughout its history. Fluctuating between 400 and 600 persons from 1890 to 1940, its population peaked at nearly 1,000 persons in 1949 and slowly decreased to its current level of fewer than 400 inhabitants. The town served as a focus of commerce and trade in western Washington County, providing rail service, banking, postal, educational, medical and other amenities. Cotton and corn processing were a significant feature of the town's economy, drawing farmers from a radius of about 4 to 6 miles to trade in Burton. Its trading area by the 1930s reached nearby farms as well as the villages of Rehburg, Sandtown, Mill Creek, and the northwestern Greenvine area. As a commercial and shipping point Burton rivaled Chappell Hill, a town of similar size in eastern Washington County. Although dissimilar in some ways, the two towns served as rural entrepôts secondary in the county only to Brenham, the county seat and its most important trade center.

#### WASHINGTON COUNTY AND AGRICULTURE.

The topography and soils of Washington County have always been conducive to agriculture, and although the soil quality was equally suitable for many other crops, cotton and corn were the major crops between 1870 and 1941. Cultivated early by pioneers, Indian Corn historically has been second only to cotton in importance to the local agrarian economy. Grown largely for domestic consumption, this staple crop was chiefly used as livestock feed, although it was also ground into meal for human consumption. By 1880, corn reached its greatest acreage of distribution in the county; thereafter until 1910, the amount of acreage devoted to its production declined although yield improved. Grist and feed mills necessary for its processing into feed or cornmeal were among the earliest commercial industries established in the county and in Burton, and they persist to the present (District Site No. 25, Burton Farmers Gin Association Feed Mill).

In addition to corn, most 19th- and 20th-century farmers grew hay (Johnson Grass, Bermuda Grass, millet, alfalfa), Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, and sugar cane; some also grew several varieties of fruit. These latter products were grown largely for home use. On

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occasion Irish potatoes were cultivated for market, with shipments either to Kansas City or St. Louis. After the turn of the century, chickens, eggs, turkeys, beef cattle, and hogs began to claim a role in the agricultural produce of the county. Dairying emerged about 1910 with much of the cream sold locally for an active creamery market while butter was shipped to Houston and Galveston.

Despite the considerable and historic importance of corn to the area, cotton remained the primary cash crop in the county for the period 1840-1940. The earliest Anglo-American settlers accompanying Stephen F. Austin in the 1820s to Washington County brought with them knowledge of the cultivation of cotton, the ability to plant and harvest the labor-intensive crop via slaves, and an understanding of the mechanical workings of the mule-drawn gin, the tool that converted the bulky, seed-bound fiber into a relatively clean, marketable commodity. The 1840s and 1850s saw an unstable political situation in Germany that brought additional European immigrants like the Broesche brothers, William D. Homeyer, and John Henry C. Turner to the county. These and others moved to the western area of the county, settling near the future site of Burton; they too raised corn and cotton, built cotton gins, engaged in gardening, and raised livestock.

Although some western Washington County farmers owned slaves, the 1860 Slave Schedule for the county suggests that the planter economy of the county was concentrated in the eastern portion around the towns of Washington-on-the-Brazos, Independence, and Chappell Hill. The western end of the county seems rather to have been characterized by small farms. The Slave Schedule also indicates that Anglo-Americans generally owned more slaves than the Germans owned. Prior to the Civil War, the county's rich soil and populous citizenry (both black and white) made it one of the highest cotton producing counties in Texas.

During the antebellum period, Washington County cotton reached market in a variety of ways. Cotton farmers living on the Brazos River could ship their cotton during high water season to collection points downstream where steamers would carry it to Houston or Galveston. Keelboats are known to have navigated the Brazos as far inland as Waco, upstream from Washington County. Like all Texas rivers, the Brazos was ill-suited for steamer traffic, but between the later 1840s and the early 1870s it remained an important transportation artery. An alternative transportation mechanism for the farmer was the wagon freighter who carried the commodity overland to market and returned with supplies. By the mid 1850s, inland farmers around Chappell Hill had recognized the advantages of rail transport for marketing their cash crop, and they contrived to help build a short stretch of railway connecting them with Galveston and Houston. The Washington County Railroad was extended from Hempstead in adjacent Waller County through Chappell Hill to Brenham.

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Thus by 1861, the westernmost railroad terminus in the county was Brenham, only 13 miles east of the site that would later become Burton. The presence of the rail after the war would influence immigration to the area and with it the simultaneous spread of the cotton culture.

The Civil War only briefly interrupted immigration to the county. In 1866, the Washington County Clerk noted that 90 parcels of land totalling over 10,000 acres had been sold to Germans in the preceding six months (Jordan 1969:73:194). The 1870s and 1880s would witness heavy immigration to the state and area; as late as the turn of the century, Germans were still entering the western portion of Washington County. Their arrival doubtless was influenced by the 1868-70 extension of the Western Branch of the Houston and Texas Central Railway from Brenham westward across the county to Austin, the state capital. The late 19th century flow of agriculturally based immigrants to the area was encouraged by other factors, among them the availability of cheap land and the railroads' policy of promoting their own lines to disembarking immigrants in Galveston. In addition, Chappell Hill area farmers contributed to the flow of immigrants by sending independent agents to Germany and to the southern United States to solicit white labor for their cotton farms.

As newcomers entered the county in the later 19th Century, they moved to small farms that often were fragments of larger antebellum farms whose owners survived the war and emancipation by selling, renting or sharecropping portions of their holdings. During the post-war decades, Washington County experienced significant tenant and share-cropper farming. Whereas prior to the war the county's cotton production had been among the state's highest, after the war with the spread of cotton cultivation to northeast and north central Texas, the county's ranking as a producer slipped even as its production increased markedly. During the later 19th Century, the grade of cotton grown in the county was improved. In European markets it became known as Brenham Cotton and was characterized by a long, fine staple.

After the turn of the century, the entrance of the boll weevil into the county depressed cotton production. By 1912, production levels had nearly returned to those of 1890. Statistics illustrate the fluctuations of the period 1890-1946.

Washington County Ginnings in Bales

1890	41,358	1910	32,996	1920	26,668	1932	24,395
1900	40,284	1912	41,084	1926	36,807	1944	14,884
1903	17,858	1916	32,217	1930	32,500	1946	9,801

(Figures compiled from Bureau of Business Research, "Cotton Production in Texas By Counties"; Agricultural Statistics; Texas Almanac 1961:232; 1968:647).

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Cotton fueled the county's agrarian economy throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and the county's production contributed to Texas' nationwide predominance in the production of cotton in the 20th century. Nevertheless, figures reveal the slow downward trend in cotton production that the county experienced after 1900. Although cotton and corn remained staples of the county's economy, Washington County lost its position among the state's highest producers of cotton. Experiments in crop diversification wrought significant changes in the county and farmers increasingly turned to dairying, truck farming, and ranching.

The declining status of cotton in the county may also be attributed to falling prices the commodity brought. The following figures from the New York Cotton Exchange reveal the fluctuations that prevailed in the marketplace. Although figures from the Galveston Cotton Exchange would reflect local market conditions more accurately, no available records were turned up during the course of this study.

Average Price (In Cents) Per Pound Paid on the New York Cotton Exchange

1870	17.01	1915	11.98
1875	12.95	1919	38.29
1880	11.41	1920	17.89
1885	9.41	1925	20.53
1890	9.19	1930	10.38
1895	8.13	1931	6.34
1900	9.25	1932	7.37
1905	11.25	1933	11.09
1910	14.56	1934	12.44

(Figures from Cotton Year Book of the New York Cotton Exchange 1935, pp. 174-177. Cotton Exchange Building, New York, New York.)

This source also reveals that the highest average price of 38.29 cents per pound, occurred immediately after World War I in 1919. In contrast, the average price of cotton fell significantly during the 1920s to a low of 6.34 cents a pound in 1931. Cotton brought its highest price on the New York Cotton Exchange (40 cents per pound) in 1920/21, while 1931/32 saw a record low of five cents per pound. Clearly, these figures correlate to fluctuations in production in Washington County and may indicate the reason farmers turned to diversified crops as cotton became less and less profitable in the 1920s and 1930s.

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## THE DEVELOPMENT OF BURTON AS A TRADE CENTER

In 1868, the Houston and Texas Central Railway bought the Washington County Railway and began construction of a new line, called the Western Branch of the H&TC. The old county railroad served as the first stretch of an additional 80 miles of track between Brenham and Austin. The roadbed of the Western Branch was planned along the "most eligible route, as near an airline as possible" toward the capital. The route chosen traveled west from Brenham over rich, sparsely settled prairie, crossing property owned by John M. Burton.

No doubt realizing the significance of a railway stop in western Washington County, Burton agreed to sell land to the railroad. He also subscribed to its stock. His support of the railroad may have been influential in choosing the name for the settlement, although there is evidence that a pre-existing settlement near the future town site was locally referred to as "Burton's".

In 1869, J.H. Denny surveyed and platted the town of Burton, and the railroad soon reached the new town site. While construction continued westward, settlers began arriving at the new western terminus of the H&TC Western Branch. Although Burton's status as terminus was relatively shortlived, it initially enhanced the town's appeal as a permanent stop on the Western Branch. Merchants immediately gathered at the spot and established "stands" to service area farmers with merchandise imported by rail.

Apart from its impact on the local economy, the railroad was responsible for Burton's genesis and defined the town's physical layout. The commercial streets were drawn parallel to the track, in a NW to SE alignment. Long, narrow lots facing the railroad track were platted to accommodate anticipated commercial and industrial establishments. Residential lots of various larger sizes generally were platted east of the commercial area, although a few were platted to the west. The primary avenues were laid out parallel to the tracks and named Railroad, Commerce, and Main Street. The earliest lots sold were those nearest the railroad on these three streets, especially on Blocks 29, 30, 31, and 46. The major lasting commercial development of the town eventually occurred east of the tracks on Railroad and Main Streets. Although Commerce Street developed to a limited extent during Burton's early decades, a fire in 1898 destroyed buildings there. The Homeyer Lumber Co. building (District Site No. 1) and one other post-1900 building mark the original location of Commerce Street.

The earliest settlers arriving in Burton in the late 1860s included numerous merchants. According to local historian A.M. Avis, Jack and Travis Burton established the first store in

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town in 1869. By 1871, Hons and Summers, another mercantile partnership that expanded by 1873 to Hons, Summers & Barnett, also had established a stand. The nearby communities of Union Hill and Longpoint served as early sources of population for Burton; indeed Union Hill eventually was abandoned in favor of Burton's more strategic location on the railroad.

To accommodate its expanding population, buildings occasionally were moved to Burton from such points as McClellans Settlement, four and a half miles away. The earliest construction in Burton typically was of the simplest type: small wood-frame, board and batten buildings with rectangular plans and gabled roofs (Steiner & Dallmeyer Store, District Site No. 22). Some, such as the Hodde Drug Store (Individual Site No. 4), exhibited false fronts.

Burton's first listing in a business directory (1884/1885) describes it as a "post village with Methodist, Baptist, and Christian churches, a school, and a few businesses." Although not all businesses known to have been in town by then are cited in the directory, the listings illustrate the enduring commercial role the community played within a larger area. A post office, established in 1870 and numerous general stores are cited. Twenty businesses are listed including the Burton House (a hotel), a wheelwright, blacksmith, lumberyard, shoemaker, barber, druggist/stationer, and a lawyer. The population of 150 persons was served by daily mail service via rail and a telegraph connection to Brenham.

Between 1884 and 1896, Burton achieved a population of 500, a level it generally maintained until the late 1940s. Its mercantile base had also broadened by 1896. The number of general stores stabilized by 1896 at a handful of merchants, although businesses and services expanded to include such amenities as a private bank, a music teacher (Miss Jessie Burton), two meat markets (M.J. Craig's and August Kraemer's), a livery (operated by W.A. Elliott), two doctors (A.S. Epperson and Charles H. Laas), and a harnessmaker (Anton Rothermel). Two blacksmiths, a wheelwright, carpenters, and a lumberyard also provided services.

Traditional building practices were most commonly employed in Burton during this period. Center passage dwellings and L-plan dwellings continued to house residents. Board-and-batten siding was common on both residential and commercial structures. The railroad, the lumberyard, and new fashions from larger towns, however, sparked a modest transformation of the town's appearance during the 1880s and 1890s. Milled lumber and decorative elements shipped to Burton via the railroad were coupled with traditional building plans, with fashionable results (W.E. Sanders House, Individual Site No. 7; Harmel House, Individual Site No. 12).

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Founding of several mercantile establishments of significance in Burton date to these early decades. Although the names of the stores changed from time to time, the businesses and families operating them endured and became synonymous with Burton. F.W.E. Fischer established his store in 1878 to achieve long-term prominence in the community. Also operating by 1878 was the H. Knittel Store on Main Street. Branch A. Watson and son Thomas operated a general store under the name of Watson & Son as early as 1884. Charles Homeyer established his family's long-term lumberyard (Homeyer Lumber Company, District Site No. 1) in 1881. Whitener and Schatz was operating as a general merchandise store by the mid 1890s. With Edward Whitener's death, Ed Schatz bought the business and ran it until 1936 (District Site No. 28). The turn of the century also saw the establishment of Steiner & Dallmeyer (District Site No. 22), another enduring general merchandise store.

In addition to numerous general stores, Burton also boasted industrial establishments which processed cotton and corn for local farmers. Cotton gins were plentiful in Washington County during the 19th and 20th centuries. Although the number of gins in the county at any given date is an elusive number, some suggestion of their frequency can be obtained from known gins in the state. For example, 4,300 gins were active in Texas in 1912; in 1925, 3,200. As in the case of Burton, a small community often supported several gins simultaneously. First powered by steam, commercial gins operated from at least 1880 until 1974 in Burton. Grist and feed mills were often secondary features of the cotton processing industry. A cotton oil mill that processed cotton seed, a by-product of ginning, also existed at Burton in the first two decades of the 20th Century.

Although a number of individuals were associated over the decades with Burton's cotton ginning history, two stand out in particular. H. Knittel Sr. was an early gin owner and operator from at least 1880 until his death in 1899. Especially conspicuous in the industry was William Bauer Sr., whose contributions spanned from the 1880s until the mid-1930s.

The period between about 1895 and 1915 saw new developments in the building industry in Burton as people accumulated enough wealth to devote part of it to larger homes. This era saw the construction of several 2-story houses of greater proportions and stylistic pretensions than had occurred before in Burton. Queen Anne detailing was favored by those who could afford to build new homes or enlarge existing ones. In these cases, detailing was applied more liberally than on most Burton dwellings and houses were built or enlarged to a larger scale. Despite these changes, the houses still tended to be traditional in plan or form (Dr. Charles Laas House, Individual Site No. 8; Kneip-Bredthauer House, Individual Site No. 11). Apart from the dissemination of architectural ideas through pattern books or standard plans, architects apparently did not directly influence the design of buildings in Burton.

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By 1910, the critical components of Burton's status as an entrepot providing services to the surrounding agricultural community had been in place for some time. Cotton production was recovering from the effects of the boll weevil's arrival about 1901; a well-known, economically secure, varied group of merchants had carved out niches for themselves; the railroad with its new depot was operating three times daily, and processing plants, including gins, grist mills and the Burton Oil Mill, had been servicing area farmers for years. In 1910 Burton was:

one of the most up-to-date towns of 500 in the state, if one may judge by ... its stores and the stocks they carry. Both are modern and characteristic of that thrift usually found in a German settlement. Farmers and citizens alike are prosperous and not only prosperous, but the latter also progressive ... (Burton) occupies a favorable position as an agricultural center and shipping point . . . (Texas Magazine, 1910:November:83).

Several events occurred after 1910 that simultaneously focused and reinforced Burton's status as the western commercial and processing center in the county. Auto service stations and garages entered Burton's economy beginning in the 1910s (Jacob/Zuehlke Building, District Site No. 30; Burton Auto Company, District Site No. 10). Construction through town of the county's first concrete highway in 1920 resulted in the expansion of such ventures. The Burton Auto Company, for example, profited from servicing vehicles involved in the highway construction. Automobile dealerships associated with existing businesses also opened during this period (Zuehlke Chevrolet Dealership, District Site No. 30).

The community's cotton processing facilities improved during the 1910s and 1920s. While the small Wendt Gin ceased operation during this period, the introduction of new capital revitalized the processing industry in Burton. Longtime gin owner William Bauer Sr. sold one-third interest in his gin to C. Knipstein, who formed a new corporation and recapitalized the enterprise under the name Knipstein & Co. Concurrently, a group of local cotton growers formed the Burton Farmers Gin Association in 1913, building and equipping a large new plant. Like its 19th-century predecessors, the Burton Farmers Gin (Individual Site No. 3) was along the railroad tracks in the center of the commercial district. In the mid-1920s, both the Burton Farmers Gin and the Knipstein Gin updated their power plants from steam power to oil-fired engines. The Burton Farmers Gin expanded its processing capacity by installing a larger engine and increasing the gin battery to five stands. During this period, construction of a cotton warehouse by the Farmers' Warehouse Cooperative supplanted open storage of cotton on a platform alongside the railroad tracks. The Farmers' Warehouse, a replacement for which exists in the district today, enhanced Burton's status as an entrepot by offering cotton buyers dry, safe storage for the baled commodity awaiting shipment to

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market. Despite these improvements to its cotton processing infrastructure, however, the town suffered the loss of the Burton Oil Mill. Its fiscal viability weakened by a surfeit of cotton oil mills in the state in the early 20th century, the mill ceased operation in the early 1920s.

As warehousing and processing facilities improved, the 1920s and 1930s witnessed an increase in the number of local cotton buyers associated with merchants. Their presence strengthened an important, mutually dependent relationship between the farmer and local merchants. By offering services of a cotton buyer, the merchant simultaneously offered credit and an inventory of goods to local farmers, thereby developing a competitive edge in the agrarian market economy.

Burton's physical environment was transformed as these changes were wrought in the local economy. Builders and carpenters such as Will Weeren, Bonham Blackburn, and Rudi Rosenbaum were responsible for many construction projects of the period, including work for residents who chose to update their buildings rather than construct new ones. Burton's vernacular building tradition gradually gave way to a modest variety of 20th century Popular styles such as the American Four Square (William Neumann House, Individual Site No. 1), bungalows, the Tudor Revival (H. Nienstedt House, Individual Site No. 9), and mail-order housing.

According to oral tradition, Burton began to lose population by the 1920s as residents were attracted by job prospects in urban centers such as Houston. Cotton production and prices in the county entered a period of serious decline after 1930, reaching an all-time low in 1931. To counteract the trend, the federal government enacted assistance programs like the Commodity Credit Corporation and the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 to bolster prices for agricultural commodities.

In Burton, plunging cotton prices decreased the amount of hard currency in circulation, thereby depressing business transactions. Area farmers began to reduce their dependency on cotton by diversifying production. In 1933 and 1934, for example, the county agricultural agent encouraged experiments in tomato truck farming. Although the effort was unsuccessful in Burton, diversification led to the emergence of a strong dairying industry in Washington County by the 1940s.

A reduction in the number and complexity of buildings erected in Burton during the 1930s reflects the economic stagnation of the period. In contrast to earlier bungalows, for example, 1930s bungalows often exhibit simplified massing and roofscapes with little detailing. Commercial buildings of the 1930s are also characterized by this simplification of forms and detailing (The Washington County Hatchery, District Site No. 29).

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Efforts to counter the depressed economy usually were the result of government programs. With the assistance of federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) funding, the Burton High School (Individual Site No. 2) was built between 1938 and 1940. Following directions similar to projects in Brenham (Brenham High School Gymnasium, NR 1990), the school introduced a conspicuous landmark example of high style architecture to an otherwise building environment dominated by vernacular and popular forms. The school also served local and area high school students who previously had to matriculate the 10th and 11th grades in Brenham.

Despite the positive note provided by construction of the Burton High School, however, the decline of the town's economy continued after 1940. Construction of a highway bypass in that year curtailed business generated by highway traffic and segregated Burton's Black residential area from the commercial district. This foreshadowed a gradual stagnation of the local economy that culminated in abandonment of the rail line by Southern Pacific in 1980 and removal of the rails in 1985.

Although the town suffered the closure of many businesses during the resultant period of stagnation, lack of development pressures led to the retention of significant numbers of historic resources with high levels of integrity. Renewed interest in these links to the past during the late 1980s led to increased preservation activities in Burton. These culminated with the establishment of a museum facility within the Burton Farmers Gin. Each spring, the community celebrates its special heritage with a festival focused on the historic gin.

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**F. Associated Property Types**

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I. **Name of Property Type** See text which begins with Continuation Sheet F-1 for a full discussion of each property type.

II. **Description**

See text which begins with Continuation Sheet F-1 for full descriptions of each property type.

III. **Significance**

See text which begins with Continuation Sheet F-1 for full statements of significance for each property type.

IV. **Registration Requirements**

See text which begins with Continuation Sheet F-1 for full discussions of registration requirements.

See continuation sheet

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See continuation sheet for additional property types

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**G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods**

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Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

See text which begins with Continuation Sheet G-1 for a summary of the identification and evaluation methods used in developing this multiple property listing.

See continuation sheet

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**H. Major Bibliographical References**

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See text which begins with Continuation Sheet H-1 for complete listing of the major bibliographical references used in developing this multiple property listing.

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- State historic preservation office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency

- Local government  
 University  
 Other

Specify repository: Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas

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**I. Form Prepared By**

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### OUTLINE OF ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

1. RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES
    - A. Vernacular Subtype
    - B. Popular Subtype
  2. AGRICULTURAL COMPLEXES
    - A. Plantation Complex Subtype
    - B. Farm Complex Subtype
  3. INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES
    - A. Gin Subtype
    - B. Warehouse Subtype
  4. COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS
    - A. Retail Store Subtype
    - B. Railroad Depot Subtype
  5. INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS
    - A. School Subtype
    - B. Church Subtype
    - C. Community Center Subtype
- 

### 1. RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

#### DESCRIPTION:

The most frequent property type to occur in Burton is the domestic building. It is almost exclusively defined by the single-family dwelling. Although a few 2-story residences exist in Burton, the typical pre-1940 residence is a one or 1-1/2-story wood frame building, most often with weatherboard or "tear drop" siding. In recent years, synthetic siding has been applied to a growing number of residences. Originally wood probably supplied by regional sawmills was the most common roofing material, now composition shingles almost universally replace them. Most residences are set back from the gravel or hard-surfaced streets.

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Burton's historic fabric is dominated by vernacular building traditions. When stylistic influences appear, they generally take the form of detailing applied to traditional forms. Detailing influenced by the Queen Anne Style characterizes 19th century residences with stylistic pretensions found in Burton. The handful of such residences have high visual impact in Burton's architecture landscape and are all associated with locally prominent merchants, doctors, or farmers.

Rather than looking elsewhere for inspiration, Burton building practices of the late 19th and 20th centuries relied more on traditional methods of design, construction, and interior ornamentation. Burton's size apparently never supported more than a handful of skilled tradesmen and each era in the town was dominated by one or two craftsmen. Established in 1881, Charles and A.G. Homeyer's lumberyard is thought to have supplied most of the materials for Burton's building activity. German immigrant carpenters William Neumann, William Nienstedt, and artisan/carpenter Henry Nienstedt perpetuated vernacular building practices in Burton.

As Burton's population reached 600 persons in the 1910s and its agrarian economy strengthened, a degree of prosperity prompted residents to update their houses by adding new porches or other detailing in modern styles. Some substantially enlarged or transformed traditional houses, while others demolished the old and built anew. Inspiration came from ideas and fashions gaining popularity throughout Texas and the nation. Publications and pattern books significantly facilitated the spread of Popular Style housing in the early 20th century, and Burton exhibits a modest number of these new designs. Examples of the American Four Square, mail-order housing from Sears and Roebuck, bungalows, and the Tudor Revival enrich the town's historic fabric.

Residences occur on single or multiple lots with or without a garage. Residences on multiple lots are more likely to exhibit early outbuildings. Much more common historically today, multiple-lot dwellings may include a chicken coop, an outhouse, a pump house, a wash house, a garage, and on occasion a small barn. Residences also may occupy two or more acres. Because these residences have more property, they may have additional outbuildings such as storage sheds, a larger barn or more than one barn, or a smokehouse. Those properties with more acreage tend to be on the edge of town while the multiple-lot residences tend to occur within the core of the residential area.

Regardless of their size, these properties exhibit a dwelling that falls generally into one of two categories: vernacular residences dating from the 1880s to about 1910, or popular style residences dating from about 1910 to 1941.

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## A. VERNACULAR SUBTYPE

Residences erected in Burton during the late 19th and early 20th centuries were usually wood frame vernacular dwellings, following fairly standard plan types. Although fewer of these buildings exist today, center-passage, 2-room, and L-plan houses occurred with frequency in the late 19th century. They were usually clad in weatherboard or board-and-batten siding, with wood shingle roofs and double-hung windows. The center-passage house often received additions to the main axis of the building or ell extensions to the front or back, becoming an L-plan dwelling by derivation. "True" L-plans, those originally built with a front- or rear-facing ell, also occurred in the 1880s and 1890s. Many of these vernacular dwellings were plain, almost devoid of ornament; proportions alone may suggest a link with prevailing architectural fashions of the era. Others exhibit detailing reminiscent of Greek Revival, for example, projecting porticoes with pediments, sidelights and transom flanking the main entrance, eave returns in gable ends; or Victorian, for example, ornamental shingles on the gable ends, turned porch columns, spindle or sawn ornamental brackets or friezes on porches, or cresting. Some vernacular houses also exhibited decorative elements of more than one style, for example, Greek Revival and Victorian detailing was often applied over several decades and were combined on a single dwelling giving a "layered" effect.

## B. POPULAR STYLE SUBTYPE

From about 1910-1915, the ascendance of vernacular housing began to give way to a limited variety of Popular Style housing types. Although a mail-order house and an American Four Square house existed in Burton in the 1910s, such were uncommon phenomena relative to the frequency of the bungalow-era dwelling. The latter was typically a 1-story, wood-frame dwelling, with early examples often exhibiting nested and intersecting hipped or clip-gabled roofs. Inset porches occur with half tapered or square columns resting on masonry piers. Some ornamental rafter ends appear, and exposed rafter ends are ubiquitous. Later bungalow-era dwellings tend to have simplified roof plans and footprints. Their roof plans often exhibit an end gable, perhaps with a nested gable sheltering a small projecting or inset porch.

Although relatively few in number, Tudor Revival houses in Burton from the late 1920s and 1930s are modestly scaled with steeply pitched roofs exhibiting one or more dominant gables. A variety of materials may occur in combination. Round arches, sometimes nested, may appear over porch entrances, over main entrances and defining niches. Porches may wrap around the front and one side of the building.

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## SIGNIFICANCE:

Residential properties may be eligible under Criterion A for their direct association with Burton's role as a regional focus of the agrarian economy. For example, dwellings of large- and small-scale cotton growers, the homes of cotton buyers or brokers, the residences of doctors who serviced both town and rural populations, and the homes of trades people (blacksmiths, cobblers, wheelwrights) and merchants will be eligible under this criterion. These residents should have contributed to the establishment of an semi-urban environment and associated amenities by provisioning and servicing the surrounding rural, cotton-producing community. Homes of educators or administrators whose contributions, while not of transcendent significance, helped to define the educational fabric of the cotton-growing communities, could also be eligible under Criterion A. Identification of cohesive concentrations of eligible dwellings also indicates the potential to establish historic districts under Criterion C.

Criterion B can apply to dwellings of persons of transcendent importance to the community or region during the period they occupied the building, if it is still recognizable to the era of occupation. Within the cotton culture, a person who helped shape major political, social, or economic trends or patterns that had lasting impact on the definition of the community during a certain era could meet this criterion. For example, the historic home of a legislator who wrote and promulgated legislation that significantly benefitted cotton-producing constituents may be eligible under Criterion B. The home of an industrialist or merchant who significantly shaped a town's founding or subsequent economic development could also be eligible under Criterion B. This would be so only if the residence is the surviving property with the strongest association to that individual's contributions and properties with stronger associations were no longer extant or eligible. Such properties could also be nominated under Criterion A.

Residential properties may also be eligible for nomination under Criterion C if they embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. In small towns where vernacular building traditions predominated for decades, well-preserved examples defined by plan or form achieve added significance. In an environment dominated by vernacular traditions, however, examples of high style architecture will be conspicuous and often warrant individual nomination under Criterion C.

## REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:

To be eligible for nomination to the National Register, dwellings should be at least 50 years old. They must not be sheathed in synthetic siding. They must be recognizable to

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their era of construction and retain important architectural elements of their main facades. For example, historic components such as windows, porches, and siding must be substantially present. They must be on their original site. Ideally, historic interiors should be present. Reversible, superficial additions such as metal- or wood-frame storm windows may be present. Substantial historic additions constituting a major updating or makeover of the building will not render it ineligible, so long as the changes reflect the period of historic significance.

Vernacular L-plan, center-passage, and 2-room dwellings specifically should exemplify their type. Their plan should be clearly visible from the street view without obfuscation by later additions. Windows should be intact, weatherboard or board-and-batten siding should be visible, and front porches should exhibit integrity of fabric, detailing and roof lines true to the period of significance. Modern roof sheathing may be present. Ideally, outbuildings will be present.

## 2. AGRICULTURAL COMPLEXES

### DESCRIPTION:

In the course of this research, documentary evidence emerged concerning antebellum and post-Civil War agricultural properties in the county. Primary source material provides excellent descriptions of antebellum properties. Because no survey has been completed of the county as a whole, discussions of the frequency and distribution of these properties relies on extrapolation. Descriptions of this subtype are included because a few of these properties may still be extant. If they reflect their original or near-original appearance, they are significant cotton-culture property types.

### A. PLANTATION COMPLEX SUBTYPE

Detailed documentary descriptions of two plantations of differing sizes and dates specify the breadth and functions of the larger antebellum agricultural complexes.

John Washington Lockhart's 1,000 acre plantation was near Chappell Hill. Lockhart acquired the land in 1848 and operated it with some 75 slaves until emancipation; thereafter he paid a monthly fee to freedmen to continue his operation. Lockhart described his house as a 1 1/2-story dwelling built in 1848 of timber from his land. One of the first homes in the area to have plaster, the structure also had fluted pillars and "old fashioned dormer windows." The interior finish was walnut. A row of crepe myrtles was planted in front of

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the house. Servants quarters faced a lane; each had trees and rose bushes planted in front. The plantation was equipped with a store, smithy, a mule-drawn gin, and log smoke house (Wallis 1930:17, 19, 20, 23).

The physical layout of Thomas Affleck's 3,400 acre plantation near Gay Hill is even better described. Established about 7.5 miles northwest of Brenham, "Glenblythe" was built between 1855-1860, prior to Affleck's move from Mississippi to Washington County. The plantation included a large, 2-story, center-passage "I" house with gabled roof, exterior end chimneys, and a five-bay double gallery spanning the front. Paired, symmetrically placed windows flanked the centered doors on both levels. The plantation had guest quarters, a carriage house, stables, a dairy, a granary, corn cribs, a greenhouse, a poultry yard, and servant quarters. Near the main house was the family graveyard. The working areas of the plantation were about two miles north of the main house at Gay Hill and included storehouses, shops, a hospital, a church, a sawmill, a cotton gin, a grist mill, a winery, a smithy, and structures (Affleck's Southern Rural Almanac & Plantation & Garden Calendar for 1860: 1986: n.p.).

The plantation complex presumably occurred less frequently than the small farm complex and is more likely to have been associated with the areas of earliest settlement within the county, including Gay Hill, Independence, Chappell Hill and old Washington. According to Lockhart, there were many plantations like his in the Chappell Hill area (Wallis 1930:19), an assertion that is borne out by the 1860 Agricultural Schedule.

#### B. FARM COMPLEX SUBTYPE

Photodocumentation of small farm complexes of the antebellum and post-Civil War eras is available in The History of Burton by A.M. Avis. Several of these houses are built of cedar; one exhibits pegged post construction. They are typically 1- or 2-room dwellings with gable roofs and central entries. A stone chimney typically is centered on an exterior gable end, with some examples featuring chimneys at both gable ends. Most dwellings include full-span porches with "witches hat" or unbroken roof lines. Weatherboard or board-and-batten siding, sometimes in combination, is typical. Overall proportions tend to be low and broad, although at least one example, erected by a German immigrant, features a steeply pitched gable roof (Avis 1985 237; see also 208; I:1974: 398, 301, 276, 312, 320, 321).

By the 1880s, rural properties exhibited detailing influenced by prevailing urban styles. The Burton Comprehensive Survey identified farm complexes within Burton's city limits that featured barns, assorted sheds, outhouses, pump houses and garage. These properties illustrate a late-19th and early-20th century pattern of locating rural complexes on the outlots

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platted at the edge of settlements. Plan types of the main houses for this subtype are the same as those for the residential vernacular subtypes. Forms such as the L-plan, center-passage, or the 2-room plan predominate, although popular style houses are also common. All are on larger parcels of land, generally ranging from two to 30 acres. Popular style dwellings may post-date their associated outbuildings. Examples within the Burton city limits are included under agricultural property types because they apparently differ little from late-19th century rural farm complexes.

**SIGNIFICANCE:**

Agricultural complexes may be eligible under Criterion A as representing the broad patterns of history, specifically cotton production. Plantation complexes will reflect the earlier history of cotton production of the antebellum era. Such properties will include a number of individual elements discussed in the earlier description. The breadth of elements in a plantation complex is a key factor in significance under Criterion A because it will determine the extent of representation for the period of history.

Farming complexes are smaller, with fewer, more concentrated elements. Nevertheless, such properties should clearly interpret the broad pattern of the region's agricultural history from after the Civil War to 1941. These latter complexes are particularly significant for representing the life of average farmers involved in cotton production. Based on information provided by the historic context, the majority of cotton producers in the region were associated with these small complexes. As few intact examples remain, they achieve greater significance. Overall, complexes should adequately illustrate the daily environment of cotton production during the period of significance.

These complexes also may be eligible under Criterion C for their architectural significance. In general, plantation complexes will be fewer in number but probably tend to represent more "high style" architecture in the principal dwelling. This element should be evaluated in comparison to other dwellings described and discussed in the "Residential" property type. Likewise, the farming complex will contain a principal dwelling which should derive its significance from a comparison to similar dwellings found in the region. Added significance is achieved if a collection of outbuildings is present on the property. Significant examples should display unusual architectural or strong building traditions not often seen in the county when grouped with the principal dwelling.

**REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:**

All complexes under consideration for nomination should be evaluated for their integrity as a grouping. The main house and auxiliary outbuildings, such as wells, pump

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houses, barns, sheds and chicken coops, are essential elements which must be present. The main house should meet requirements delineated for residential property types. In addition, outbuildings must not have been moved or altered significantly. Enough of the original acreage should be present to convey the original rural setting for the property to retain integrity of feeling.

## 3. INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

## DESCRIPTION:

Examples of this property type are likely to be near the former Houston & Texas Central Railway (now Southern Pacific) on an east-west line through the county that links Chappell Hill, Brenham, and Burton, or near the historic Gulf, Colorado & Santa Fe Railway (now Atcheson, Topeka & Santa Fe) on a northwest-southeast line passing through Brenham and Gay Hill. Examples of the property type may also occur near major roadways.

Surviving examples of this property type, including cotton gins and compresses, cotton seed oil mills, weighing platforms, warehouses, textile mills and worker housing, are very rare. This study identified fewer examples of this property type than any other, in part because of the small number of such resources built during the historic period. For example, although Texas held a nationally prominent role in cotton seed oil processing, only 233 cotton seed oil mills had been built in the state by 1914. This figure represented 26 percent of the nation's total such processing facilities during the peak year for production (Texas Almanac 1961:350). By 1972, only 33 active mills existed in the state (Bureau of Business Research, 1989:12). Textile mills are also very rare in Texas, since most of the state's early-19th century cotton crop was exported to the northeastern United States or Europe for cloth production.

Components of this property type typically will be utilitarian in form, 1 to 3 stories in height, and often rectangular in plan. Examples are likely to be large scale buildings devoid of ornament. The original simple plans and roof lines of such resources typically have been modified through later additions. Sheet-metal sheathing or roofing is the most common material. While brick examples exist, masonry historically was atypical for resources of this property type in Texas.

Examples of the property type in Burton include a gin and a cotton warehouse. The function of the gin stand, the primary component of any gin house, was to separate the lint from the seed. Thereafter the seed was drawn from below the stands by an auger and conveyed to a weighing station so that a measure of the seed could be taken for the farmer. The remaining seed was then dumped into an adjacent seed house for storage. Meanwhile,

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the fiber was conveyed to the baling station, a two-station baling press at the Burton Farmers' Gin, where one box was loaded while the other compressed the cotton into a bale. The bale was then tied, lowered to the basement floor, turned out onto the cotton platform for sampling, and removed to the warehouse or returned home with the producer. The advent of mechanized harvesting in 1940 resulted in an increase in stems, burs, and trash in the seed cotton to be processed. In response, a variety of cleaning and drying equipment was introduced to the process. Cleaning and drying took place at various sites on the gin house floor or at elevated stations above, between the introduction of the seed cotton to the gin stand and final baling.

### A. GIN SUBTYPE

As the result of technological advances and for other reasons as well, the "ideal" gin house, of which the Burton Farmers Gin would be an example, necessarily exhibits floor plan and roof plan modifications, both pre-dating and post-dating 1940, to physically accommodate evolving processing equipment. The "ideal" gin exhibits an assortment of equipment that dating from various decades. The introduction of a "new" piece of equipment to a particular gin, in fact, will often post-date its emergence on the market since gin owners commonly purchased used equipment at a cost savings from competitors closing business. Although there are many possible equations for the "ideal" historic gin, it is possible to specify an "ideal" gin in terms of the major components of a gin plant like the gin house, gin equipment, and gin yard.

### B. WAREHOUSE SUBTYPE

Like gins and cotton seed oil mills, warehouses were located adjacent to the railroad tracks or on a spur. In Burton the warehouse consists of an extended, metal-clad building with a gable roof over the oldest portions and a shed roof over the post-1940 additions. It functioned as a storage site for cotton awaiting shipment by rail and later by truck. A state-licensed and bonded weigher was employed at the warehouse.

NOTE: Other subtypes such as cotton seed oil mills exist, but are not yet researched.

### SIGNIFICANCE:

Of all property types, industrial resources have the most tangible link with the cotton industry by processing of the staple, storing it, or processing by-products. The property type achieves significance under Criterion A because of the cotton industry's contribution to state and regional agricultural development and simultaneous industrial development during the 19th and 20th centuries. Resources directly related to cotton ginning, cotton compressing,

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cotton seed oil processing, or the textile industry may be eligible under this criterion. Properties in this category could also achieve significance under Criterion B for their association with persons who contributed materially to a town's industrial development. For example, an industrialist involved in the cotton processing industry over a period of time, and whose efforts secured an important industrial role for the area should be significantly associated with specific processing facilities. Examples of the property type also could be eligible for nomination under Criterion C for embodying a specific type of construction. A well-preserved masonry gin house, for example, could be demonstrated to be significant if 1) masonry was rarely used in the area, 2) few gin houses survived in the area, and 3) the empty masonry gin house retained a sufficient level of its historic integrity to convey its period of significance. Criterion A may prove to be the most frequently employed registration criterion because of the multi-faceted, widespread influence the cotton industry had on the history of Texas.

## REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:

Eligible gins, compresses, cotton seed oil mills, or textile mills ideally will have intact main buildings and some historic interior equipment. A gin, for example, could retain a historic power plant, a battery of gin stands, an exterior appearance reflecting much of its historic configuration, and a gin yard with some intact components and associated land. The gin yard could include a water tower, bale platform, wagon bay, seed house, or fuel tank. As the scarcity of resources probably precludes retention of all these features, somewhat permissive registration requirements are justifiable. Thus it is recommended that consideration for nomination be given to any historic example of the property type that is recognizable to a pre-1941 period of construction and retains integrity of location and setting.

## 4. COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

## DESCRIPTION:

Commercial buildings in the town embody the role of commerce in Burton's development as a rural entrepot. The sites cluster in the center of town on one block of Railroad Street, facing the old railroad right-of-way (the track itself was removed in 1980 after the Brenham to Austin line was abandoned); on both sides of Washington Street for one block west of its intersection with Main Street, and on three blocks of Main Street, north and south of that same intersection. Most members of the type lie south of the primary intersection of town. After the town was platted, these blocks were among the first to be purchased by merchants or industrialists. Thus this area of town has the longest association with Burton's genesis and development.

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## A. RETAIL STORE SUBTYPE

Commercial buildings housing retail stores share physical characteristics as well as functional similarity. Many are on 25 foot wide commercial lots, those platted originally as narrow, deep lots. Some face a steep grade on Main Street where, in places, the terrain slopes precipitously toward Indian Creek. To accommodate the slope, commercial buildings historically were raised above street level with access to wood porches provided via steps. Although common in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, only a few examples today exhibit this physical accommodation to topography.

Commercial buildings usually are located within the central business district, often in close proximity to the railroad. The typical commercial building is a 1-story, wood-frame building set back from the street by the width of a sidewalk. Builders used a variety of sheathing materials including brick, stucco, tin, corrugated metal, horizontal wood siding and board-and-batten siding. Examples of weatherboard siding and pressed metal also occur with some frequency. Buildings may be detached or grouped in various numbers.

The most common members of the subtype are vernacular gable-roofed buildings with rectangular plans and wood flat or stepped false fronts. The earliest commercial buildings exhibited rectangular plans, gable roofs and board-and-batten siding. Historically common, their numbers are reduced today. Some buildings have experienced alterations over time resulting in historic layering, such a bungalow-detailed canopy added to a 19th century commercial building. Masonry store fronts are unknown before 1900, and infrequent after that date. They are typically rendered without ornament apart from a flat parapet. Limited stylistic influences generally take the form of prefabricated detailing such as cast stone facade treatment, cast iron storefronts or pressed metal cornices.

## B. RAILROAD DEPOT SUBTYPE

Erecting depots that sheltered passengers, freight, and train control under a single roof historically was the most common method of providing railway service to small communities in Texas. With larger railroad companies gaining control of rail lines in Washington County after 1885, standardized design characterized depot construction in the region during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The overall size and scale of a depot appear directly related to the amount of freight and passenger traffic a community generated.

Best characterized as functional architecture, railroad depots generally are free standing frame or brick constructions along the railroad right-of-way. Examples of this subtype typically are affiliated with a community's commercial district. Depots usually have

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extended rectangular plans that may include space for offices and passengers, as well as storage and loading dock facilities for freight. Floor plans generally are rectilinear, with a waiting room at one end, an office in the middle, and freight facilities at the end opposite the waiting room. The office furnished sufficient space for the agent to keep records and service the public, and generally featured an attached bay window that enhanced visibility up and down the track. This section also contained the operator's table with a telegraph key and other tools needed for train control. Freight storage occupied the final space, with large doorways providing access to some type of wood platform. These facilitated the transfer of freight between wagons or trucks and the trains. Extended roof overhangs afforded protection from weather for these activities. While variations in this basic layout existed, small town depots customarily conformed to this prototype.

## SIGNIFICANCE:

Commercial buildings will be eligible under Criterion A for their associations with the cotton industry. Merchants in Burton were largely dependent upon the cotton grower who visited town to make purchases, obtain services, process cotton or cotton seed, or to sell crops at the end of the growing season. Many commercial buildings therefore will achieve significance through their association with the cotton-dominated rural economy. Commercial properties include service businesses such as barbershops, doctors' offices and banks, as well as general stores where farmers sold their cotton and purchased their supplies. The significance of depots can also be justified under Criterion A for their direct association with the crucial role that railroads played in a town's founding and subsequent development as a focus of the rural agrarian economy. Integral to the success of a rail transportation operation, depots facilitated the access to markets that was crucial to the development of the cotton industry in the area.

A smaller number of commercial properties may be eligible for nomination under Criterion B, for their association with individuals of considerable importance to the town's or region's commercial or financial development. Such a person, for example, in a rural cotton-growing community may have been the first 19th century businessman to combine retailing, cotton buying, and cotton processing all in one enterprise and, through the successful operation of that multi-faceted business over time, helped to establish the town's 19th century status as the retail-trade-processing center of the region.

Examples of the Retail Store subtype may also be eligible for nomination under Criterion C as representative of a style or type of architecture. For example, an intact resource of an identified vernacular subtype such as the false front store or a rare example of high style architecture would be eligible under this criterion. Depots may also be eligible under Criterion C as embodiments of the type of architecture built by railroad companies in

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the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The rarity of the type increases the significance of the few examples that survive. Identification of cohesive concentrations of eligible commercial buildings also indicates the potential to establish historic districts under Criterion C.

## REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:

Among the more numerous historic resources, commercial buildings should exhibit integrity to their period of construction. Reversible additions such as metal-frame storm windows are permissible, but major historic architectural features and fabric such as fenestration should be substantially present. They should not be sheathed in synthetic siding. Although examples of the Retail Store subtype should remain on their original sites, the transient nature of the Railroad Depot subtype in the late 20th century abates the need to retain integrity of historic location. Increasing abandonment of rail lines has resulted in the relocation of depots throughout the state. To remain eligible, however, such resources should retain integrity of setting in addition to integrity of design, materials and workmanship.

## 5. INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS

## A. SCHOOL SUBTYPE

Later 19th century school buildings in the Burton area often were wood-frame, 1-story buildings with gabled roofs, utilitarian in form, and devoid of ornament. The 1874 Burton Free School for white students typified this vernacular tradition. Now converted to a Burton residence and much changed, originally it was a 1-story, wood-frame, long rectangular building with gable-end mid section flanked by intersecting, gable-roofed wings. Clad in board and batten, the Burton example was probably larger than the typical rural school, which was a functional 1-room, gable-roofed, board and batten building with rectangular plan.

Early 20th century area schools (at Greenvine, St. Paul Rehburg (1913), Burton (1914), and Hohenwalde (1921)) indicate that school buildings could increase somewhat in size during the period and could exhibit the popular bungalow-era motifs of horizontal proportions, hipped roofs, and exposed rafter ends. Despite the use of brick for the 1914 Burton school, the more common material after 1900 was wood.

Public school facilities erected in the 1930s with assistance and funding from the Works Progress Administration (WPA) represent a third development in the changing

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physical appearance of these resources. Typically constructed with native fieldstone veneers, these large 1- to 3-story buildings exhibit metal casement windows and strong geometric shapes. The geometric emphasis and reliance on local materials link schools of this era to the International Style and to the Rustic Style typical of contemporaneous park construction.

**B. CHURCH SUBTYPE**

Spiritual matters were of fundamental concern to the earliest Washington County settlers, and churches served a strong, binding role within the communities throughout their 19th and 20th century histories. Churches occurred in almost all towns, and sometimes in between, whether in the "large" communities of Brenham, Burton or Chappell Hill, or "small" communities of 50 to 150 persons, like Wesley, Greenvine, Zionsville, Gay Hill, Rehburg, etc. Evangelical Lutheranism occurs frequently in the county no doubt due to the substantial German population. Catholic congregations, such as that at Chappell Hill, also existed due to the late 19th century Polish immigration. Moravian congregations such as at Wesley developed because of Czech settlement. Early Baptist, Methodist and Church of Christ congregations occurred in the county. The earliest churches predictably were organized in the earliest communities, i.e., Gay Hill, Chappell Hill, and others in the 1840s and 1850s; typically one or more congregations would organize immediately after a town's founding.

Log construction is known to have been used for some early churches. Wood-frame construction with weatherboard siding appears to have been commonly employed in the later 19th and early 20th centuries. Although sanctuaries from the period 1870-1915 appear to have been generally small, historic photographs of sanctuaries particularly from the 1870s and 1880s suggest especially small proportions. Of wood-frame construction and weatherboard siding, these buildings all exhibit a rectangular plan and foundations (where known) of native stone piers. The major architectural feature may be a gable-end, centered, pyramidal belfry rising above the building, either within the perimeter of the roof plan, as at the 1878 Burton Methodist Church and 1879 Bethany Christian Church, or over a projecting vestibule, as at the Greenvine Baptist Church. The resulting main entrance was centered on the gable end. Returned eaves in the gable end and a main entrance with occasional transom were other decorative features that could occur.

By the 1890s, Gothic stylistic elements were beginning to occur, such as Gothic-arched windows and a new emphasis on verticality. Interior graining and/or marbleizing are known to have occurred in some late 19th century interiors and/or on church furniture; stained glass windows appeared.

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The small-scale, wood-frame, 1-story sanctuary of the 19th century continues to occur in the early 20th century. The few documented examples indicate that corner belfries, Palladian windows, corner entrances, and ornamental shingles may appear as decorative elements. The proportions change somewhat during this period with a new emphasis on horizontal lines.

Churches for Black congregations in 20th-century Burton appear to have followed the general trends found on sanctuaries for white congregations. The few documented examples exhibit 1-story, wood-frame buildings with gable roofs, weatherboard and/or tear drop siding, a small belfry. Bungalow-era proportions are present. The buildings, however, often appear more modestly designed, smaller in scale, and exhibit a reduced use of ornament than those constructed somewhat earlier in the century for white congregations. Several west Washington County communities, including Burton, Greenvine and Rehburg, featured sanctuaries accompanied by a parsonage and educational building, all in close proximity to one another.

As late as 1949, a good number of the later 19th century wood-frame, rectangular plan churches were still extant in the county. In Burton, the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, however, saw the erection of a number of modern, 1-story masonry-clad sanctuaries with spires. In some cases, interior features of the older buildings were removed and installed in the new sanctuaries; there are cases of the older building's being moved and/or adapted to another function. A notable case of the latter is the Mt. Zion Baptist Church, rebuilt in the early 20th century in Burton but returned in 1983 to its original location at the Mt. Zion Cemetery, where it now serves as a museum.

### C. COMMUNITY CENTER SUBTYPE

This subtype constitutes a small sample. Both members of the type in Burton date to the same era. The 1919 United Brothers of Freedom Lodge and the former Burton American Legion Hall are frame buildings clad in weatherboard siding. They are generously sized in relationship to contemporaneous residential types. Although little ornament is present on either, the proportions of the United Brothers of Freedom Hall demonstrate its affinity with the bungalow era. The American Legion Hall, however, is a large, cavernous building with a steeply pitched roof. The UBF Lodge is at the heart of Burton's Black residential area and the American Legion Hall has been relocated to the commercial district from the edge of town. In both cases, however, the buildings historically were surrounded by ample green space to accommodate picnics and community gatherings such as sports events and dances. Each facility included covered sheds from which food and drink were distributed.

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### SIGNIFICANCE:

Schools reflect the community's strong dedication to educating their children, a longstanding tradition within the county that considerably predates Burton's founding (Washington County is well known in Texas for its early and progressive role in establishing entities of higher learning during the antebellum era.) During the middle decades of the 19th century, some schools were established in Washington County by farmers who donated land for the school, erected the building or provided for its relocation to the school site, and who collectively paid teacher salaries. In this case, the property achieves significance under Criterion A through its specific link with the cotton industry. Late-19th century schools were sometimes founded in response to 1870s state legislation authorizing the establishment of public schools. These schools also are eligible for nomination under Criterion A through their embodiment of the development of the public school system in Texas. Finally, schools subsidized by area farmers beyond the county tax authorized by the state legislation achieve significance under Criterion A through this direct association with the cotton industry.

Criterion B could apply to schools via, for example, a teacher or administrator who made a particularly significant contribution to the school and thus to the education of the community's children.

The significance of a school building could be justified under Criterion C if it were a good, intact example of a style or type of architecture. Criterion C could also be justified for buildings designed by an architect in a style that departed markedly from local trends, or for representative works of a builder who made a substantial contribution to the community's built environment.

Based on limited examples in Burton, churches as a subtype may most often be justified under Criterion C, for their merit as representative of a style or type of architecture.

Community centers may achieve significance through Criteria A, B or C. Dominance of German traditions in rural Washington County often led to the establishment of organized athletic clubs. Functioning as community centers, these clubs offered athletic and social outlets for surrounding farmers and their families, as well as a place farmers could exchange labor and skills. The tradition of helping each other was strong in the area, and the organization and its events facilitated communication among individuals farmers about their farming needs. Thus, examples of the community center subtype could achieve significance under Criterion A for the opportunities for social and occupational interaction it provided the cotton farming population.

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The criteria chosen for justifying the significance of a particular property will depend upon the available data and, if more than one criterion could be justified, which offers the most representative or strongest link to the context.

### REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:

If the significance of a property is justified under Criterion A or B, integrity requirements may be somewhat more relaxed than for those properties nominated under Criterion C for their architectural significance.

In the former case, the historic building should be recognizable to its period of construction and should be at its original location. It should have historically functioned as a community center, school or church during the period of significance established by the context. Conversion to a new use in more recent times does not preclude listing, although its original function will ideally still be apparent. Reversible changes such as the installation of metal-frame storm windows or composition roof shingles may have been implemented, but significant original design elements such as plan, form and detailing must be present. Ideally, auxiliary buildings should be retained.

For justification under Criterion C, the building should retain its original siding, fenestration, porches and detailing, in addition to meeting the requirements established for buildings justified under Criterion A or B. Buildings justified under Criterion C must not be sheathed in synthetic siding.

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### SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

This study is based on a survey of historic resources within the corporate limits of Burton in Washington County, Texas, conducted by Julie W. Strong in the fall of 1988 and spring of 1989. The project was initiated by the Burton Heritage Society and facilitated by a survey and planning grant-in-aid of the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service as administered by the Texas Historical Commission. One hundred and thirty-eight buildings of the 250-300 standing in Burton in the fall of 1988 have been identified as 50 years of age or older.

Survey efforts began with an appraisal of research sources, followed by an analysis of the town's physical characteristics. Noted were the arrangement, location and relationship of commercial and residential areas, typical or atypical building materials, socio-economic patterns, concentrations of historic buildings, and the range of stylistic influences on Burton's historic fabric. Preliminary assessments of architectural merit and potential National Register eligibility of properties and notes on renovation activities were made.

Site-by-site field work began on the west side of town, traveling street by street generally east, then south and north. Working in collaboration with photographers, all potential historic sites (50 years or older) were assigned numbers and their locations recorded on a 1970s city engineering map drawn by Clay and O'Malley of Brenham. Eight rolls of 35mm black and white film (labeled "A" - "H") were used to record the properties with locational information noted in the Inventory of Properties. Color slides were shot for High Priority Sites. Initial descriptions of all historic sites were written on standard survey forms supplied by the Texas Historical Commission and tentative preservation priorities were assigned to the properties.

Descriptive data gathered during field work was supplemented by a photographic inventory compiled by Tinsley and Hoffmeister, the Burton Heritage Society's survey of property owners, data in the History of Burton, and oral interviews. All oral history data acquired were recorded on survey cards, as were bibliographic references and locational data. Architectural and/or historical significance statements were also entered on the survey cards. Cards were given a unique number which references the resource map and follows the sequence of the survey. With the completion of field work and acquisition of basic data on many of the sites, the survey cards were typed as a permanent record.

A resource map was produced based on Clay and O'Malley's 1970s map of Burton. All surveyed properties within the Burton city limits were plotted on the map. Many sites

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had been drawn on the base map for its original use; those not already plotted were added during the survey. Actual building footprints of historic resources were not plotted, as locations were denoted by simple squares.

Follow-up visits to Burton allowed for verification of the resource field map, clarification physical characteristics, and establishment of preservation priority definitions based on age, history, architectural merit, integrity, and condition. High, Medium, and Low preservation priorities were assigned to each resource based on these standards.

Survey results directed the research leading to this multiple property nomination. Research focused on High priority resources and led to the development of two related historic contexts. Both correlate to statewide planning activities aimed at producing a historic context for Agriculture and one for Community and Regional Development. Temporal boundaries were set by watershed years in local history.

A typology of property types was developed based on the analysis of the built environment. The predominance of vernacular building traditions led to a typology based on form and function.

Integrity requirements were based on National Register standards compared to the condition of the property in 1989. Additional requirements were set after evaluating the survey data for scarcity of property types and extent of alterations and deterioration.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Burton, Washington County, Texas

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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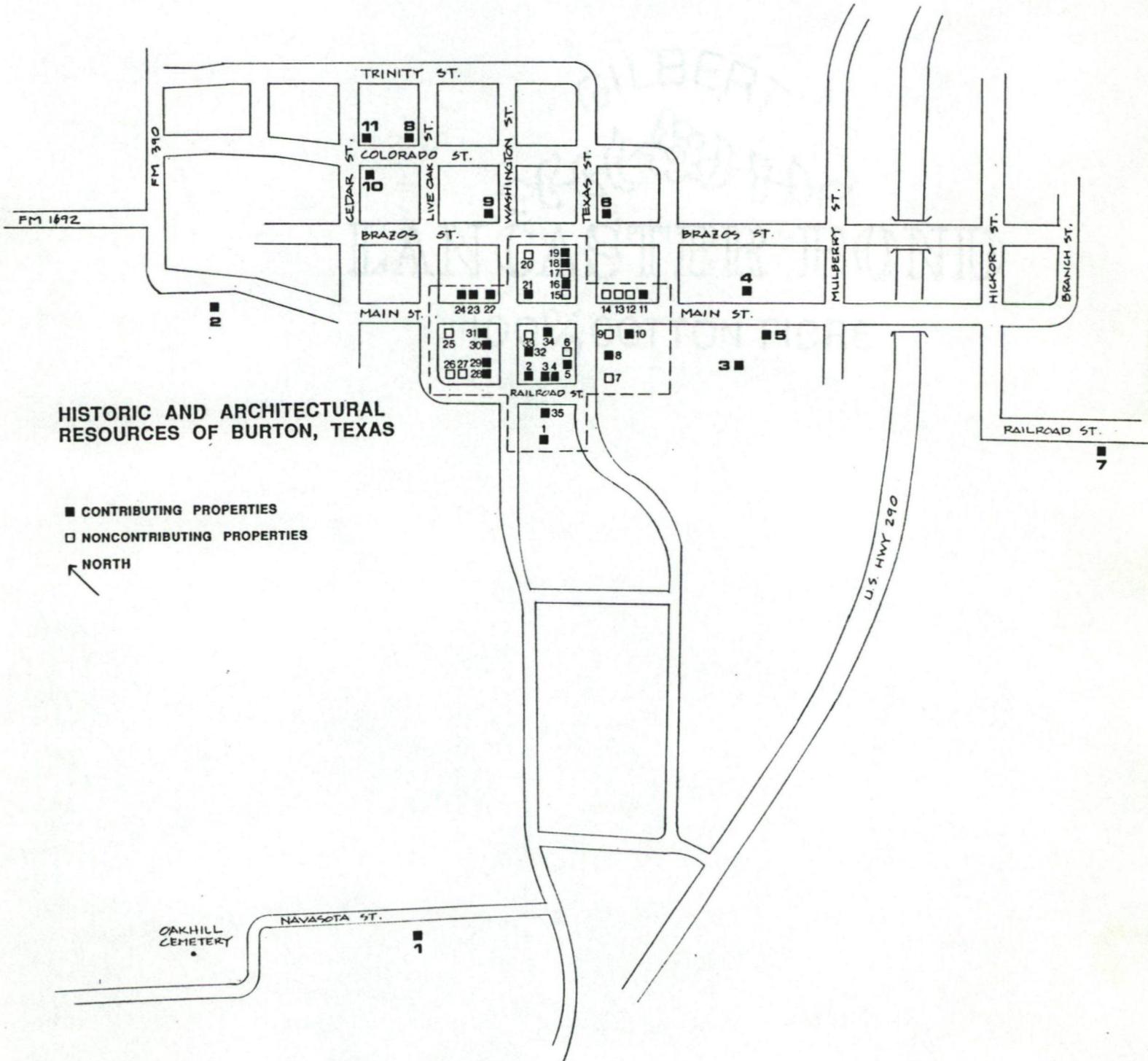
The nomination for the Joanna Knittel House (Individual Site No. 10) will be submitted pending completion of photodocumentation of the property.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

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HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL  
RESOURCES OF BURTON, TEXAS

- CONTRIBUTING PROPERTIES
- NONCONTRIBUTING PROPERTIES



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number all Page 4

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INVENTORY OF HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES OF BURTON

BURTON COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT:

- Site No. 1 - Homeyer Lumber Company
- Site No. 2 - Old Burton State Bank
- Site No. 3 - H. Knittel Store
- Site No. 4 - H. Knittel Store Annex
- Site No. 5 - Meat Market
- Site No. 6 - Chamber of Commerce
- Site No. 7 - Farmers' Cotton Warehouse
- Site No. 8 - The Barber Shop
- Site No. 9 - A.W. Muehlbrad House
- Site No. 10 - Burton Auto Company
- Site No. 11 - Schwartz & Schwartz Store
- Site No. 12 - Contel Building A
- Site No. 13 - Contel Building B
- Site No. 14 - Commercial Building
- Site No. 15 - Commercial Building
- Site No. 16 - My Way Grocery
- Site No. 17 - George Foechner House
- Site No. 18 - Buck's Blacksmith Shop
- Site No. 19 - Tin Shop
- Site No. 20 - American Legion Hall
- Site No. 21 - Knittel House
- Site No. 22 - Steiner & Dallmeyer's Store
- Site No. 23 - Steiner and Dallmeyer's Annex
- Site No. 24 - Humpty Dumpty Grocery Store
- Site No. 25 - Burton Farmers Gin Association Feed Mill
- Site No. 26 - Residence
- Site No. 27 - Residence
- Site No. 28 - Ed Schatz Store
- Site No. 29 - Washington County Hatchery
- Site No. 30 - Jacob/Zuehlke Building
- Site No. 31 - Zuehlke Chevrolet Dealership
- Site No. 32 - Burton Cafe
- Site No. 33 - Burton State Bank
- Site No. 34 - Burton Drugstore
- Site No. 35 - Houston and Texas Central Railroad Depot

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number all Page 5

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INDIVIDUAL SITES:

- Site No. 1 - William Neumann House
- Site No. 2 - Burton High School
- Site No. 3 - Burton Farmers Gin
- Site No. 4 - The Hodde Drugstore
- Site No. 5 - Wehring Shoe Shop and Residence
- Site No. 6 - William Nienstedt House
- Site No. 7 - William Edward Sanders House
- Site No. 8 - Dr. Charles Laas House
- Site No. 9 - Herbert Nienstedt House
- Site No. 11 - Kneip-Bredthauer House

5/6/91

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Burton MPS

Washington County, TEXAS

COVER		Date Listed
	Substantive Review	6/11/91
1. Burton Commercial Historic District	Substantive Review	6/11/91
2. Burton Farmers Gin	Substantive Review	6/11/91
3. Burton High School	Entered in the National Register	6/11/91
4. Hode Drugstore	Substantive Review Entered in the National Register	6/11/91
5. Kneip--Bredthauer House	Substantive Review	6/11/91
6. Laas, Dr. Charles, House	Substantive Review	6/11/91
7. Neumann, William, House	Substantive Review Entered in the National Register	6/18/91
8. Nienstedt, Herbert, House	Substantive Review	6/11/91
9. Nienstedt, William, House	Substantive Review Entered in the National Register	6/11/91
10. Sanders, William Edward, House	Substantive Review	6/11/91
11. Wehring Shoe Shop and Residence	Substantive Review	6/11/91

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Burton MPS (COVER)

Washington County  
TEXAS

Working No. 5.6.91  
Fed. Reg. Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Due: 6/7/91 6/20/91  
Action:  ACCEPT 6/22/91  
           RETURN  
           REJECT  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review:    sample            request            appeal            NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

The MPS document presents a fine and comprehensive description of Burton, a center of the important cotton industry in Washington County. It secured its economic position through the presence of processing industries, a railroad line, and industries and commercial facilities that served the agricultural community.

Recom./Criteria Accept  
Reviewer Autonietta J. Rose  
Discipline History  
Date 6/11/91

\_\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: \_\_\_\_\_ technical corrections cited below  
  \_\_\_\_\_ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible?    yes    no

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved   date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

**8. Significance**

Period \_\_\_\_\_ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates \_\_\_\_\_ Builder/Architect \_\_\_\_\_  
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Form Prepared By**

**12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification**

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_\_ national \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature \_\_\_\_\_

title \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

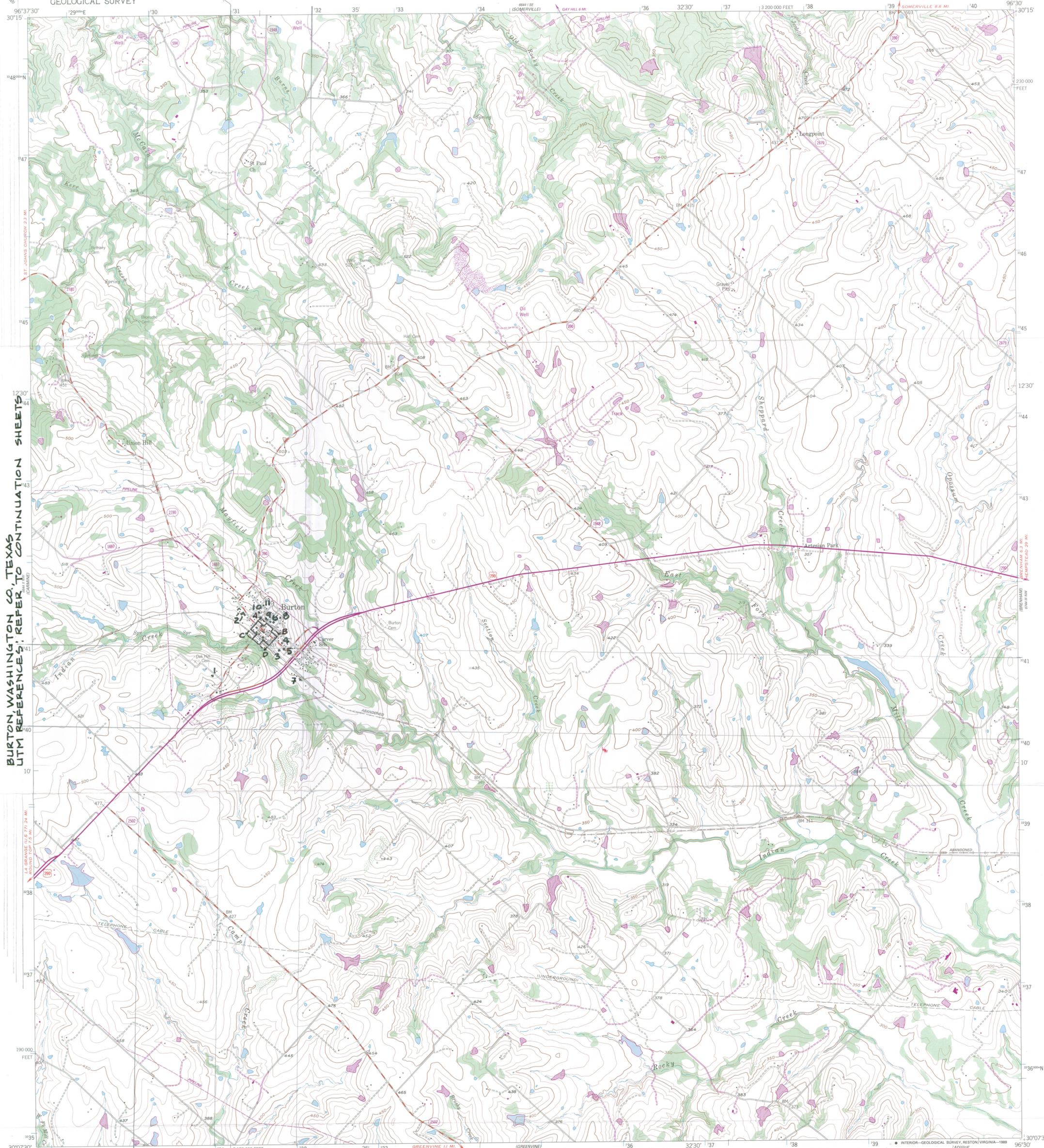
**13. Other**

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

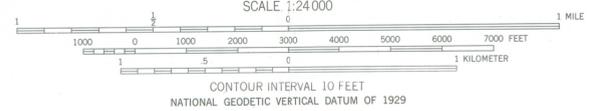
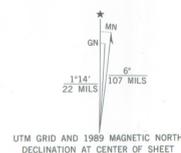
Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

HISTORIC & ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES OF BURTON, TEXAS  
BURTON WASHINGTON CO, TEXAS  
UTM REFERENCES: REFER TO CONTINUATION SHEETS



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1956. Field checked 1958  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American Datum  
10,000-foot grid ticks based on Texas coordinate system, central zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 14, shown in blue  
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 19 meters south and 25 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks  
Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled from aerial photographs taken 1981 and other sources  
This information not field checked. Map edited 1989



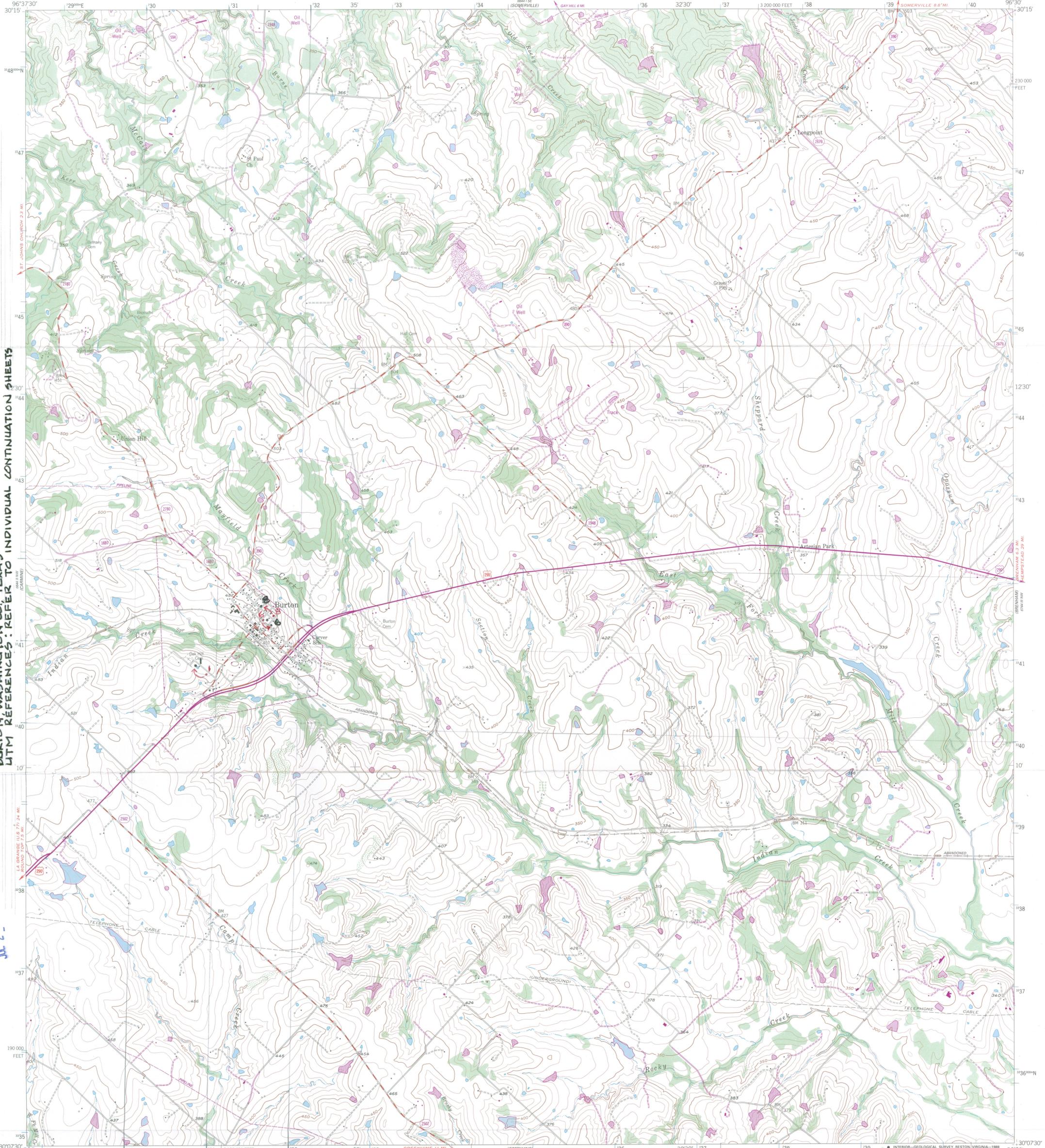
ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY DENVER, COLORADO 80225 OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

BURTON, TEX.  
30096-B5-TF-024  
1958  
PHOTOREVISED 1989  
DMA 6644 II NE - SERIES V882

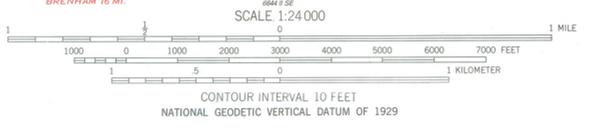
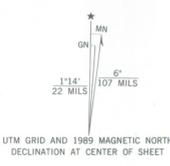
3096-214



HISTORIC & ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES OF BURTON, TEXAS  
UTM CORRECTIONS FOR SITES 1, 2 & 8 (IN BLACK)  
BURTON, WASHINGTON CO, TEXAS  
UTM REFERENCES: REFER TO INDIVIDUAL CONTINUATION SHEETS

JUL 2 - 1991

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1956. Field checked 1958  
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	State Route



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