1. NAME
COMMON: Little Campus
AND/OR HISTORIC: Asylum for the Blind

2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER: Bounded by 18th Street, Oldham Street, 19th Street, and Red River Streets
CITY OR TOWN: Austin
STATE: Texas
COUNTY: Travis

3. CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY (Check One)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

OWNERSHIP
- Public
- Private
- Public Acquisition:
  - In Process
  - Being Considered

STATUS
- Occupied
- Unoccupied
- Preservation work in progress

ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
- Yes:
  - Restricted
  - Unrestricted
  - No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)
- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Educational
- Entertainment
- Government
- Industrial
- Military
- Museum
- Park
- Private Residence
- Religious
- Scientific
- Transportation
- Other (Specify)

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
OWNER'S NAME: University of Texas at Austin
STREET AND NUMBER: Little Campus 19th and Red River Streets
CITY OR TOWN: Austin
STATE: Texas

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Report of Regents to Governor and Legislature
STREET AND NUMBER: University of Texas archives
CITY OR TOWN: Austin
STATE: Texas

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE OF SURVEY: None
DATE OF SURVEY:
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
STREET AND NUMBER:
CITY OR TOWN:
The historic main building, built in 1857, was constructed of rough limestone with dark bricks in the finishing of the cornices. This two-story structure has limestone segmental arches which cap the windows, limestone quoins which provide emphasis and structural reinforcement, a one-story portico, and a basement. After the Civil War wide porches were added onto the ground floor and an additional story was added. It was also completely covered with stucco, although at present the original heavy brick and stone are visible by the door and on the east wall. The historic main building is presently being used as the annex building of the Division of Extension of the University of Texas at Austin. The "Little Campus" complex presently consists of five additional buildings. Each of these five structures are brick.

The auditorium building that was constructed in 1903 is currently used as the main building of the Division of Extension. This structure has limestone sills and lintels at the windows. The windows of the uppermost story (third story) have limestone sills and brick arches. It has a large, massive, three-story Classical Italianate arch that dominates the front of the structure. The principal entrance at the front of this building is dramatically recessed. A stepped parapet above the three-story Italianate arch enhances the balance of the building. At present the roof is of standing seam tin.

The building that was constructed in 1900 serves as offices for the Natural Fibers Economic Research Institute. The window detailing is highlighted by segmental arches containing a keystone. The architectural style is dominated by High Victorian Italianate influence.

The two-story brick building constructed in 1912 that originally was used for classroom facilities is currently used for storage by the Department of Geology of the University of Texas at Austin. The rear entrance has a double door with an ornate transom. The lower windows of this two-story building are arched and the upper story windows are rectangular in shape. A string course of brick divides the lower and upper stories. The symmetry of this building is enhanced by a corbelled brick parapet.
## SIGNIFICANCE

### PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- [ ] Pre-Columbian
- [ ] 16th Century
- [ ] 18th Century
- [ ] 20th Century
- [x] 19th Century
- [ ] 17th Century

### SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

- [x] 1856-present

### AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- [ ] Aboriginal
- [x] Prehistoric
- [x] Historic
- [ ] Agriculture
- [x] Architecture
- [ ] Art
- [ ] Commerce
- [ ] Communications
- [ ] Conservation
- [x] Education
- [ ] Engineering
- [ ] Industry
- [ ] Invention
- [ ] Landscape Architecture
- [ ] Literature
- [ ] Military
- [ ] Music
- [ ] Political
- [ ] Religion/Philosophy
- [ ] Science
- [ ] Sculpture
- [ ] Social/Humanitarian
- [ ] Theater
- [ ] Transportation
- [ ] Urban Planning
- [ ] Other (Specify)

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

On August 16, 1856, the Texas Legislature appropriated 100,000 acres of land and $10,000 for the establishment of an asylum for the blind. This asylum was the first of its kind in the state. The plan for the site was Italian in style. The contractor for the original building was Abner H. Cooke who built it with rough limestone and dark brick. Abner H. Cooke built numerous other well-known structures in the Greek Revival style of architecture in the central Texas area, for example, the Neill-Cochran House, the Texas Governor's Mansion, and the Woodlawn (Pease Mansion). The asylum operated from 1857 through 1865 when it was closed due to the disruption caused by the Civil War.

Since 1865 the buildings have been used for various purposes. Immediately after the Civil War General Armstrong Custer and his family used the facilities as a residence while he commanded 13 regiments of infantry and 13 regiments of cavalry. Between 1866 and 1915 the building complex again served as facilities for the blind.**During this period, four additional brick buildings were constructed. In 1880 a music and literary building was constructed. This building burned to the ground in 1891 and it was immediately rebuilt. In 1883 a building was constructed for classroom use. In 1900 another building was constructed. In 1903 an auditorium building was constructed. A carriage house was also probably constructed during this period. In 1912 a two-story brick building was constructed to provide additional classroom space. Between 1915 and 1917 the complex of buildings was vacant. During World War I the complex was used as one of the six preliminary air training institutes of the School of Military Aeronautics in the United States.

With the end of World War I and the influx of ex-service people into the University of Texas at Austin, the building complex was acquired by the University. Hence, the district became referred to as "Little Campus".

(See continuation sheet # 1)
By the mid 1920's the district was again used by the State Hospital system. During World War II the building reverted to use by the military.

In 1951 the Extension Service of the University of Texas at Austin acquired the oldest historic and main building. The Extension Service also occupies the building that was constructed in 1903 and it serves as the main building. The Natural Fibers Economic Research Institute is officed in the building that was constructed in 1900. The building that was constructed in 1912 is used for storage by the Department of Geology. The building that originally served as a carriage house is used for storage. The Division of Transportation uses the building that was originally built in 1880 and rebuilt in 1891 after a fire destroyed the original building.

*The initiation of the instructional program of the Institute was delayed because the first student was not admitted until December 27, 1856. This first enrollee was a boy. It was almost two months until the school gained two more students on February 21. Then by March the school had seven pupils (all boys), two teachers (one taught literature and the other taught music). No additional students enrolled in 1857, but the school continued to grow until it was closed in 1865 with a total enrollment of seventy-five boys and girls.

**Between 1866 and 1915 the average enrollment was 250 boys and girls. The asylum served grades one through twelve. Grades one to five were elementary grades and studied the basic subjects. Grades six to eight were junior high and studied history, English, arithmetic, reading, science. High school
grades were nine to twelve and they studied courses approved by the Texas Education Agency. The school was fully accredited and twenty-two and one-half credits were required for graduation. Therefore graduates of the Asylum were not required to take a college entrance examination. Besides academic and music courses home economics courses taught to the girls made them admirable seamstresses and homemakers, and woodworking taught to the boys produced skilled craftsmen. One of the products of the woodworking classes were brooms which were sold at quite a profit. Though each boy received a commission for his brooms the school still returned $3,000 to the State Treasury every year from the broom sales. In the music field piano, pipe organ, voice, violin, band, and chorus were taught. All students were required to take physical education unless excused by a doctor's permit. Girls were taught dancing—modern, folk, tap, and others. They also participated in track and tumbling. The boys were taught wrestling, tumbling and track. In these areas they participated in tournaments with other blind schools throughout the country. Tumbling exhibitions were often given at commencement exercises. Students were encouraged to participate in many sports such as football, basketball, volleyball, softball, croquet, and even skating. There were two gymnasiums, a boys and a girls added after the Civil War. The students were also exposed to the performing arts. The Austin Statesman advertised a free operetta given by the students in 1909. The characters included were the daisy, lily, rose, sunflower, onion, thistle, oak tree, clover, and goldenrod. They were all entered in a contest for the national flower and judged by a bailiff, lawyers, and Uncle Sam. Amusement was also afforded the children. Every Friday night throughout the school term a movie was shown in the auditorium. Frequently on Saturdays there was a party giving the boys and girls a chance to meet socially.
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Austin, Public Library, Austin and Travis County Collection.

Williamson, Roxanne Kuter, Victorian Architecture in Austin, Austin, 1967.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORNER</th>
<th>LATITUDE</th>
<th>LONGITUDE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NW</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LATITUDE</th>
<th>LONGITUDE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30° 16' 42&quot;</td>
<td>97° 43' 52&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 7 acres

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

STATE:   CODE    COUNTY:   CODE

STATE:   CODE    COUNTY:   CODE

STATE:   CODE    COUNTY:   CODE

STATE:   CODE    COUNTY:   CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Gary L. Hume, Project Director
Duncan Glenn Muckelroy, Historian

ORGANIZATION: Texas Historical Commission

DATE: Dec. 18, 1973

STREET AND NUMBER: P.O. Box 12276, Capitol Station

CITY OR TOWN: Austin

STATE: Texas

CODE: 048

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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

National [ ] State [x] Local [ ]

Name: Truett Latimer
Title: State Historic Preservation Officer
Date: December 20, 1973

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 11/13/74

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date: 1/12/74
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPERTY</th>
<th>LITTLE CAMPUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STATE</td>
<td>TX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKING NUMBER</td>
<td>13747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TECH REVIEW</td>
<td>PHOTOS 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MAPS 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTROL REVIEW</td>
<td>#10 acreage is missing. Very inaccurate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HISTORIAN</td>
<td>I'm not sure how much more we need. Would like a little more on school, but would accept as is. W.R. Luce 4/8/74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN</td>
<td>I'd like more info on the school for the blind. How big it was, how many students, etc. Return JT 3/6/74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARCHEOLOGIST</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REVIEW UNIT CHIEF</td>
<td>Since it has to go back anyway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRANCH CHIEF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEEPER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Register Write-up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Register entry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send-back</td>
<td>7/15/74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-submit</td>
<td>7/30/74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entered</td>
<td>AUG 1 3 1974</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The attached National Register Inventory-Nomination form is being returned to your office for clarification of the information indicated below.

1. Name.

2. Location.

3. Classification.

4. Owner of Property.

5. Location of Legal Description.

6. Representation in Existing Surveys.

7. Description.

8. Statement of Significance. Please add more information about the school for the blind. How many students were there? What were its aims? Teachers? Subjects?


   a. Longitude and Latitude Coordinates. Longitude (or Latitude) appears to be off by about 1° 46'. Please check.
   b. Acreage. Please fill in.

11. Form Prepared By.

12. Certification.

Photographic Coverage.

Map Coverage.

Other.

Clarification or correction of the above items must be made prior to the initiation of our professional review. Correction of these technical errors does not necessarily insure that the nomination will then satisfy the National Register criteria in full.

Thank you for your attention to the above items checked. Thanks.

SIGNED: 

Cor Herrington
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department/Review</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TECH REVIEW</td>
<td>PHOTOS 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTROL REVIEW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HISTORIAN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architectural Historian</td>
<td>I wonder what kind of sounds the onomatopoeic term 'thistle made' -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARCHEOLOGIST</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REVIEW UNIT CHIEF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRANCH CHIEF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEEPER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**National Register Write-up**: 10/25/74

**Federal Register entry**: Oct. 1, 1974
NPS Number  8/3/74
Title:  Little Camp
       Travis County, Texas
Loc.  Oblique of principal lodge
      where fire & tension 18th st.

---

CODE:  Oblique of principal
VIEW:  building inside face South
NEG. BY: Travis Collection
DATE:  c. 1890

NOT TO BE USED WITHOUT PERMISSION
TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 12977
CAPITOL STATION
AUSTIN, TX  78711
PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NPS Number 8/13/73

Title: Little Campus

Travis County, Texas

Loc. Oblique of E. wall and principal entrance

CODE: Oblique of E. wall and

VIEW: Principal entrance

NEG. BY: THC

DATE: 8-28-73

NOT TO BE USED WITHOUT PERMISSION
TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

P.O. BOX 12553
CAPITOL STATION
AUSTIN, TX 78711
PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NPS Number  8/3/72

Title: Little Campus

Travis County, Texas

View: Elevation of side entrance facing E

CODE: ____________________________

Elevation of side entrance facing E

VIEW: ____________________________

NEG. BY: TMC

DATE: 8-22-72

NOT TO BE USED WITHOUT PERMISSION

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

P.O. BOX 11773
CAPITOL STATION
AUSTIN, TX  78711
PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NPS Number: 8/13/76

Title: Little Canepond

Loc: Travis County, Texas

Elevation of principal entrance

CODE: ________________________________

VIEW: Entrance facing 18th

NEG. BY: T.H.C.

DATE: 8-22-76

NOT TO BE CED WITHOUT PERMISSION
TEAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

P.O. BOX 1299
CAPITOL STATION
AUSTIN, TX 78711
Missing Core Documentation

Property Name: Little Campus
County, State: Travis County, Texas
Reference Number: 74002091

The following Core Documentation is missing from this entry:

___ Nomination Form
X___ Photographs (missing #8)
___ USGS Map
STATE: Texas
COUNTY: Travis

PROPERTY MAP FORM
(Time all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

1. NAME
   COMMON: Little Campus
   AND/OR HISTORIC: Asylum for the Blind

2. LOCATION
   STREET AND NUMBER: Bounded by 18th St., Oldham St., 19th St., and Red River St.
   CITY OR TOWN: Austin
   STATE: Texas
   CODE: 048
   COUNTY: Travis
   CODE: 453

3. MAP REFERENCE
   SOURCE: USGS 7.5' series, Austin east quadrangle
   SCALE: 1:24000
   DATE: 1966

4. REQUIREMENTS
   TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS
   1. Property boundaries where required.
   2. North arrow.
   3. Latitude and longitude reference.
July 24, 1974

Ms. Kate Cole
Chief, Review Unit
National Register
of Historic Places
Dept. of the Interior
National Park Service
18th & C Streets, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Ms. Cole:

Enclosed is the revised nomination of the Little Campus to the National Register of Historic Places. We hope that it meets with your approval and that it will be accepted.

Receipt of the original submission of this nomination was acknowledged by the staff of the National Register of Historic Places on January 3, 1974. The return of this submission for revision was not received by our staff until July 22, 1974. Consequently, we trust that another delay of six months will not be required for action on this revised nomination.

Sincerely,

Truett Latimer
State Historic Preservation Officer

by:

Duncan G. Muckelroy
Historic Preservation Coordinator

TL/DGM/pbs
Enclosures
cc: Congressman J. J. Pickle
ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE  TEXAS

Date Entered  AUG 13 1974

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little Campus</td>
<td>Austin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Travis County</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also Notified

Hon. John C. Tower
Hon. Lloyd Bentsen
Hon. J.J. (Jake) Pickle
Regional Director, Southwest Region

PR MMOIT/klm 8/19/74

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mr. Truett Latimer
Executive Director
Texas State Historical Survey Committee
Post Office Box 12276
Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711