NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME
HISTORIC
Clay County Courthouse and Jail

2 LOCATION
Jail: on Ikard Street, one block west of courthouse
Courthouse: public square 100 North Bridge Street

3 CLASSIFICATION

/categories
- DISTRICT
  X BUILDING(S)
  X STRUCTURE
  SITE
  OBJECT

/status
- OCCUPIED
  X UNOCCUPIED
  WORK IN PROGRESS

/accessibility
- ACCESSIBLE
  X YES: RESTRICTED
  X YES: UNRESTRICTED
  NO

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

/name
County of Clay

/street & number
Public Square, 100 North Bridge Street

/city, town
Henrietta

/state
Texas

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

/courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.
Office of the County Clerk, Clay County Courthouse

/street & number
100 North Bridge Street

/city, town
Henrietta

/state
Texas

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

/title
Historic Sites Inventory

/date
1970

/depository for survey records
Texas Historical Commission

/city, town
Austin

/state
Texas
The plan of the Clay County Courthouse is in the form of a Greek cross with narrow arms projecting to the north and south and wide arms projecting to the east and west. Corridors extending through both arms of the cross provided access from all four sides of the building which was positioned in center of the public square. On the ground level, the wide arms of the cross contained offices and the narrow arms contained the stairways providing access to the courtroom which originally occupied most of the second floor.

The form and details of the courthouse are Classical. The most noteworthy features of the exterior are the sandstone columns on tall pedestals projecting from each of the eight corners, expressing the second floor as a piano nobile. The walls of locally-manufactured red brick are accentuated by sandstone stringcourses. During construction an iron cornice was substituted for the stone cornice that was originally specified. Originally the roof was hipped on a low pitch, creating a stronger horizontality than the new gable roof provides. A tall tower with four clock faces surmounted by a cupola and finished with sheet metal details was replaced early in the twentieth century by a low dome of frame construction. Late in the century, an iron fence and concrete sidewalks were installed—these, of course, have been removed and replaced. In 1891 a fireproof record room was added and in 1893 twenty-four incandescent lights were installed (an early use in West Texas of artificial lighting).

On the interior the offices remain essentially in their original configuration. However wall surfaces have been refinished with pecan paneling and lower ceilings have been installed. In recent years, along with interior alterations, many window openings have been partially or wholly filled.

Typical of many of those in West Texas, the Clay County Jail was a two-story masonry work with stuccoed walls. Roman arches with emphasized imposts were employed on the front section, which was emphasized by an asymmetrically placed gable; elsewhere segmental arches were used. Wall decoration consists of stringcourses, an ornamental brick cornice and some relief on the Roman arches. Other decorative features include corner finials and a small cupola, the latter of which was also functional.
The Clay County Courthouse and Jail have architectural and governmental significance. The Courthouse is distinguished by its stone details and cross-shaped plan, which was relatively unusual in Texas. Both the courthouse and jail have been the focus of government and law enforcement activities for nearly a century. In addition, during the early years of its use, the Courthouse was the location of numerous social activities of the county.

Clay County was organized in 1857 but Indian raids later forced abandonment. In 1872 the county was reorganized and the following year the county commissioners ordered the construction of the first courthouse, a rectangular stone building.

Named, according to legend, for the wife of Henry Clay of Kentucky, Henrietta was originally laid out in 1860. After abandonment during Indian problems the town was reoccupied in 1865 but was once again vacated as a result of pressures from the Indians. It was finally occupied permanently in 1873 and it was incorporated in 1882, the year it became the permanent county seat. Located on the Fort Worth and Denver Railroad and the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railroad, it became a commercial center for the surrounding region.

Late in 1883 the commissioners' court ordered T.J. Craig, County Judge, to advertise for plans and specifications for a new courthouse to be erected on the public square. After examining those submitted, the plans of W.H. Wilson of Dallas were accepted. Later, another architect, (first name unknown) Tozer, became associated with the project. On January 29, 1884, after consideration of the bids submitted, contractors D.W. Strain, Ward Risley and A. Swinburn of Fort Worth were selected to build the temple of justice for $34,800 and on June 24 the cornerstone was levelled by Henrietta Lodge No. 454, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons.

As occasionally was the case in the nineteenth century, various rooms in the courthouse served functions outside government. In 1884 the grand jury room was rented to the Knights of Honor for use as a lodge room. A room on the third floor was rented as a law office and in 1886 another room was rented to the Henrietta Silver Cornet Band for $4.00 per month. Later, however, orders were issued forbidding the use of the courthouse for balls and dances. Then, in 1905 the court issued an order forbidding the use of the courthouse for ice cream parties because
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Clay County Commissioners' Court Minutes, Vols. I-V.
Fort Worth Daily Gazette, February 2, 1884, p. 6; May 1, 1884, p. 6.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3 acres

UTM REFERENCES

ZONE EASTING NORthing
A 14 517.4 127.9
B 14 517.4 127.9
C 14 517.4 127.9
D 14 517.4 127.9

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The courthouse is bounded Ikard and Gilbert Streets on the north and south, and be Bridge and Main Streets on the east and west. The jail is located one block west of the courthouse on Ikard Street.

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

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Willard B. Robinson-Professor of Architecture

ORGANIZATION
Division of Architecture-Texas Tech University

STREET & NUMBER
P.O. Box 4499

CITY OR TOWN
Lubbock

STATE
Texas

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL _____ STATE X LOCAL _____

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Texas State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 10/24/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 10/3/78

ATTEST: William Lebovich

DATE 9/29/78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
"the continued waste of salt and salt water on floors have damaged same to a considerable extent, as well as the sleepers under the floor. . ."

Today the courthouse continues to serve solely the functions of county government.

In 1874 a sixteen-foot-square jail was built with six-inch wooden walls. Built of solid oak the plan consisted of a central hall with three cells on either side. This work is preserved in Henrietta.

However, this early calaboose obviously proved unsatisfactory. In less than three years after its acceptance in 1875, notices were published inviting contractors to submit proposals for the construction of a new sandstone jail. On August 12, 1878 the commissioners' court ordered that the contract for the erection of a county jail be let to J.L. Thomas of Fort Worth. For $7,000 the contractor, who developed his own plans, was to build a jail with exterior walls of pitch-faced ashlar sandstone.

However, this jail was not built. Finally in 1890 the Pauley Jail Building and Manufacturing Company of Saint Louis was awarded a contract for the construction of a new jail for $24,000. The jail was completed and accepted that same year.
Property: Clay County Courthouse and Jail

State: Texas
Working Number: 10-31-27-1735

TECHNICAL
Photos: 4
Maps: 1

CONTROL
S. Klein weil

HISTORIAN
Franklin

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN
Accept

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER
Inventory
Review

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF
Accept
Lebovich
2/14/78

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

National Register Write-up
Send-back
Entered: OCT 3 1978

Federal Register Entry
11-7-78
Re-submit

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service WASO No. 7
Clay County Courthouse and Jail
Ikard Street
Henrietta, Clay County, Texas

Mike Yancey 1977
THC file
West facade of Jail

Clay County Jail

OCT 31 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
Clay County Courthouse and Jail
Public Square 100 North Bridge Street
Henrietta, Clay County, Texas

Mike Yancey 1977
Texas Historical Commission
South Elevation of Courthouse

OCT 31 1977
poe

2p4
OCT 3 1978

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
Clay County Courthouse and Jail
Public Square 100 North Bridge Street
Henrietta, Clay County, Texas

Mike Yancey 1977
THC file
East Facade of Courthouse

OCT 31 1977

3 of 4
Clay County Courthouse and Jail
Public Square 100 North Bridge Street
Henrietta, Clay County, Texas

Mike Yancey 1977
Texas Historical Commission
Northwest Oblique of Courthouse

OCT 31 1977

Property of the National Register
WASO-166
(August 1971)

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

TELEPHONE REPORT

1. CALL ☑ TO: ☐ FROM (Name)

Stanley Klein

2. ADDRESS (Tel. No. if needed)

41 EHPD

3. SUBJECT, PROJECT NO., ETC.

4. DETAILS OF DISCUSSION

Need USGS map for Clay County Courthouse and jail. (blueprints for HFM)

[Have called several times]

will send if have

NAME OF PERSON PLACING/RECEIVING CALL

P. Lemon

TITLE

Clerk

OFFICE

Control
ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE TEXAS

Date Entered OCT 3 1978

Name
Clay County Courthouse and Jail

Location
Henrietta
Clay County

Also Notified
Honorable Lloyd M. Bentsen
Honorable John G. Tower
Honorable Jack E. Hightower

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

Byers/bjr 10/6/78
### NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET

**NAME as it appears on federal register:** Clay County Courthouse and Jail

**LOCATION street & number**
100 N. Bridge St., Ikard St.

**city / town**
Henrietta

**state**
TX

**vicinity of**

**county**
Clay

**NPS REGION:**
SW

**OWNER**
PRIVATE

**CONGRESS DISTRICT:**
13th

**EXISTING SURVEYS**
HAER

**ADMNISTARTOR:**

**EXISTING SURVEYS DHR DHAER FUNDED:**
YES

**SOURCE OF NOMINATION:**
X

**WHS IN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT?**
NO

**WHS IN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK?**
NO

**CONDITION**
original site

**FEATURES:**
SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1

**ACCESS**
YES

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE :**
ENGINEERING-11

**CLAIMS:**
explain 'first'

**ARCHITECTURAL STYLE(S):**

**ARCHITECT:**

**INTERIOR:**
NOT INTACT-0

**ARTIST:**

**ART:**
PHILOSOPHY-20

**LITERATURE-19**

**INVENTION-14**

**TRANSPORTATION-25**

**INSTITUTIONAL:**

**NATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP**