

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCRS use only

received 27 AUG 1979

date entered FEB 1 1980

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Old Hidalgo Courthouse ~~Complex~~ and Buildings

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Flora and First Streets \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Hidalgo \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district 15

state Texas code 048 county Hidalgo County code 215

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name see continuation sheet

street & number

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hidalgo County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Edinburg state Texas

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_\_\_ yes  no

date 1973 \_\_\_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Texas Historical Commission

city, town Austin state Texas

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR HCRS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED  
DATE ENTERED

OCT 1 1979

FEB 1 1980

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 4

PAGE 1

Owners:

Old Rodrigues Store - Mrs. Dolores Alonzo  
Box 266  
Hidalgo, Texas 78557

Old Hidalgo Post Office - Mr. Alberto Samano, Jr.  
Box - Drawer B B  
Hidalgo, Texas 78557

Old Hidalgo Courthouse and Jail - Mr. Alberto Samano, Jr.  
(same as above)



## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Old Hidalgo Courthouse Complex encompasses three converging corners at Flora and 1st Street in the small border town of Hidalgo. The original Public Square is bounded on the west by Bridge Street, originally one of the main north-south routes between the U.S. and Mexico via a ferry (now accessible by a bridge at the same location). The courthouse and jail were built in this location in 1886 after flooding from the Rio Grande destroyed the originals.

The courthouse originally was a two-story symmetrical-plan structure of handmade brick from Reynosa, Tamaulipas, Mexico. The mason was Juan Rios, of Tamaulipas. The square plan consisted of a central north-south hall with a pair of panelled doors at each end, tall narrow windows symmetrically spaced for ventilation, and was capped with a wooden cupola. The cupola, roof, and second story were destroyed by fire in 1910, and were replaced by a hipped roof over the ground floor. Windows have since been modified and the original first floor exterior walls are intact. The building is now used as a rental residence, although plumbing has never been added to the structure.

Adjacent to the courthouse, joined by the remnants of the connecting brick courtyard and walls, the jail is a simple two-story block of the same handmade brick, by the same mason from Mexico. There are trabeated openings, and a slight projection in the brick coursing forms a cornice, with two chimneys enhancing the silhouette. The jail is used for storage now.

The original brick pavers and ruins of the brick walls connecting the two buildings, with the original hand-dug brick well in the center, are still in evidence. A small wood-frame outhouse stands near the northeast (rear) corner of the courthouse.

East of the courthouse and jail, across 1st Street, is the one-story brick merchandise store which also housed the Post Office from the date it was built in 1889 until 1913. The rectangular building is capped by a projecting entablature on the west and south facades (facing 1st and Flora Streets) complete with brick dentils and corbeled cornice. The detailing and proportions of the building are similar to the elegance and sophistication found in the Portscheller designed buildings of the early historic district of Roma, Texas (N.R. 1972). The roof, supported by vigas and latias, is of tipichil, a local term for a type of caliche concrete. The building is now being used as residence.

South of the Post Office, across Flora Street, is the Rodriguez Store (ca. 1890), a two-story brick building with pilasters terminating at the cornice in a small corbelled parapet. The pilasters rest on a cyma-reversa base. The lower floor doors are trabeated and the second floor windows are segmentally arched. This building is now unoccupied. A 1922 vintage gasoline pump remains on the northwest corner.

Both the Post Office and Rodriguez Store are set very close to the street in the Mexican fashion.



# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1886, 1889, 1890 **Builder/Architect** Juan Rios

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Old Hidalgo Courthouse Complex is the only remaining cluster of historic buildings in the town and represents the late 19th century communities that developed along the northern bank of the fertile Rio Grande River Valley founded on previous 18th century settlements from the Spanish Nuevo Santander colony, where early settlements denoted ranch out-posts possibly as early as 1779. The historic structures in this complex share mainly a vernacular expression derived from their common Spanish heritage, as well as a temporal relationship. During the period the county seat was located in Old Hidalgo, Anglo-American settlement increased, the first railroad was brought to the area (1904), the first citrus fruit and vegetables were produced on a commercial basis, and the first newspaper was printed.

Hidalgo County was organized in 1852, following the war with Mexico, and named in honor of Father Miguel Hidalgo, leader of the Mexican independence movement in 1810. The county seat, named Edinburg, was established with the public buildings on the bank of the Rio Grande River. The relocation of the community further from the river around the new courthouse in 1886 preceded the almost complete destruction of the early site by an overflow of the river in 1887. In 1908, Edinburg as county seat was again relocated north some 14 miles and the old town site was renamed Hidalgo.

While interest in saving the courthouse complex buildings is high, the community lacks the funds for major preservation or restoration efforts.



# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approx. 2  
Quadrangle name Hidalgo, Texas

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

Courthouse and jail:

A	1 4	5 7 3 7 9 8	2 8 8 6 0 8 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C			
E			
G			

Rodriguez Store and Post Office:

B	1 4	5 7 3 8 5 2	2 8 8 6 7 8 8
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D			
F			
H			

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet. The boundaries include the nominated structures and their immediate surroundings only.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Binnie Hoffman, Special Projects Coordinator

organization Texas Historical Commission date July 30, 1979

street & number P.O. Box 12276, Capitol Station telephone (512) 475-3094

city or town Austin state Texas 78711

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date August 13, 1979

For HCRS use only

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

Sally G. Aldham  
Keeper of the National Register

date 2/1/80

Attest: Beth Croverson  
Chief of Registration

date 12/1/79



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED 27 AUG 1979

DATE ENTERED

FEB 1 1980

CONTINUATION SHEET

2

ITEM NUMBER

9

PAGE

1

Historical Preservation Plan, Lower Rio Grande Development Council.

Historic Houses Medallion Program, Hidalgo County.

Unpublished Historical Monograph by Abel R. Longorio, Hidalgo, Texas.

Historical Map of Hidalgo County, Texas, published by the Hidalgo County Historical Commission.

Unpublished Historical Monograph by Anne Magee, Hidalgo, Texas.



FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR HCRS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

27 AUG 1979

DATE ENTERED

FEB 1 1980

CONTINUATION SHEET

1

ITEM NUMBER 10

PAGE 1

Rodriguez Store: lot 4, block 23, town of Hidalgo

Post Office: lots 1 and 2, block 24, town of Hidalgo

Courthouse and jail: The structures and their connecting pavement, plus an apron of 10 ft. surrounding the complex. This grouping overlaps several lots within block 22 and it is difficult to tell exactly how far it extends into the various lots.



80004136

Property Old Hidalgo Courthouse and Building

State Texas Hidalgo Working Number 8-2779-2052

**TECHNICAL**

**CONTROL**

Photos 4  
Maps 1

Town's only remaining complex of buildings relating to town's origin and early growth. All to see how acreage relates, however - it is wider as if they're discontinuous, but we think it's a single area. 1/26/79  
Odessa OK

**HISTORIAN**  
accyst  
Grossena  
12/1/79

Per phone call - 2 bldgs are across the street from another. There are a couple of intrusive bldgs separating the others.

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN**

**ARCHEOLOGIST**

**OTHER**

**HAER**

Inventory \_\_\_\_\_  
Review \_\_\_\_\_

**REVIEW UNIT CHIEF**

accyst  
P. Grossena  
12/1/79

**BRANCH CHIEF**

**KEEPER**

National Register Write-up \_\_\_\_\_  
Federal Register Entry 23-81

Send-back \_\_\_\_\_  
Re-submit \_\_\_\_\_

Entered FEB 1 1980





*Old Hidalgo Courthouse + Buildings*

Old Hidalgo Courthouse Complex  
Flora and First Streets  
Hidalgo, Hidalgo County, Texas  
Photo by Texas Historical Commission,  
1973 (still accurate)  
Southwest oblique of courthouse.  
Photo #1

FEB 1 1980

27 AUG 1979







*Old Hidalgo Courthouse Buildings*

Old Hidalgo Courthouse Complex  
Flora and First Streets  
Hidalgo, Hidalgo County, Texas  
Photo by Texas Historical Commission,  
1973 (still accurate)  
Southeast oblique of courthouse,  
showing south elevation of jail.  
Photo #2

FEB 1 1980

27 AUG 1979







*Old Hidalgo Courthouse & Buildings*

Old Hidalgo Courthouse Complex  
Flora and First Streets  
Hidalgo, Hidalgo County, Texas

Photo by Texas Historical Commission  
1973 (still accurate)

Southeast oblique of jail

Photo #3

FEB 1 1980

27 AUG 1979





*Old Hidalgo Courthouse Buildings*

Old Hidalgo Courthouse Complex  
Flora and First Streets  
Hidalgo, Hidalgo County, Texas

Photo by Texas Historical Commission,  
1973 (still accurate)

Northwest oblique of Rodriguez Store  
Photo #4

FEB 1 1980 27 AUG 1979





*Old Hidalgo Courthouse + Buildings*

Old Hidalgo Courthouse Complex  
Flora and First Streets  
Hidalgo, Hidalgo County, Texas  
Photo by Texas Historical Commission,  
1973 (still accurate)  
Southwest oblique of Rodriguez  
Store showing Post Office in  
background.

Photo #5

FEB 1 1980

27 AUG 1979





*Old Hidalgo Courthouse Buildings*

Old Hidalgo Courthouse Complex  
Flora and First Streets  
Hidalgo, Hidalgo County, Texas  
Photo by Texas Historical Commission,  
1973 (still accurate)  
Southwest oblique of Post Office  
Photo #6

FEB 1 1980

27 AUG 1979

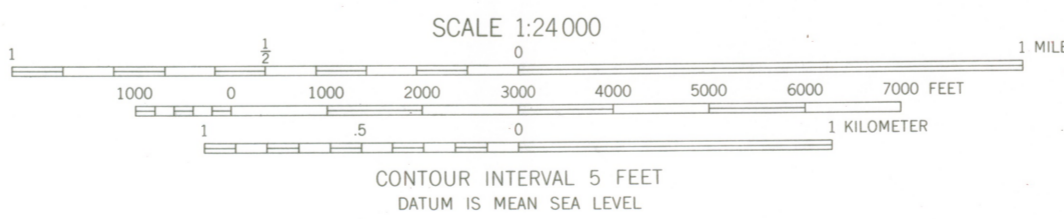
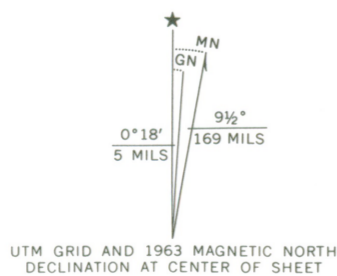




Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1961. Topography by planetable surveys 1963

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system, south zone  
1000 meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 14, shown in blue



CONTOUR INTERVAL 5 FEET  
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
U.S. Route	Slate Route

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER 25, COLORADO OR WASHINGTON 25, D.C.  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

2698-121

87 AUG 1979

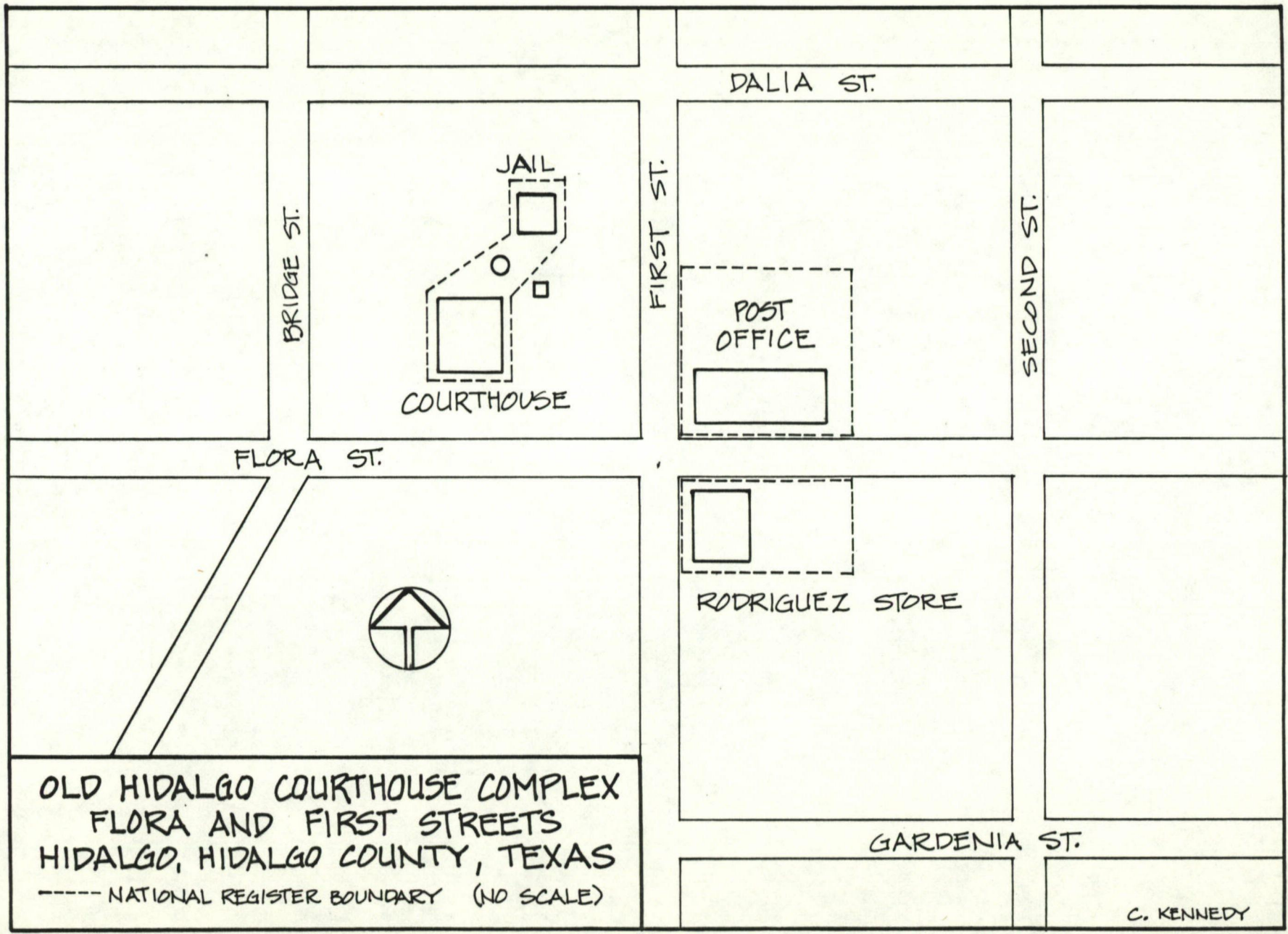
HIDALGO TEX.  
SE/4 MISSION QUADRANGLE  
N2600-W9815/7.5

1963

AMS 6336 III SE-SERIES V882

14





DALIA ST.

BRIDGE ST.

FIRST ST.

SECOND ST.

JAIL

COURTHOUSE

POST OFFICE

FLORA ST.

RODRIGUEZ STORE

GARDENIA ST.

OLD HIDALGO COURTHOUSE COMPLEX  
 FLORA AND FIRST STREETS  
 HIDALGO, HIDALGO COUNTY, TEXAS

----- NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY (NO SCALE)

C. KENNEDY



FEB 1 1980





TRUETT LATIMER  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

P. O. BOX 12276  
AUSTIN TEXAS 78711

September 24, 1979

Dear Ms. Byars:

Enclosed is a continuation sheet listing the owners of the Old Hidalgo Courthouse Complex, a nomination sent by this office on August 21. It was omitted from the original package.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Lissa Anderson  
Director  
National Register Survey and Nominations

LA/mc

Enclosure

Ms. Delores Byars  
National Register of Historic Places  
U. S. Department of the Interior  
Pension Building  
440 G Street, N. W.  
Washington, D. C. 20243

*The State Agency for Historic Preservation*

Rec.  
OCT 1 1979



FEB 1 1980

eter 1 TCO



Mrs. Dolores R. Alonso  
P.O. Box 266  
Hidalgo Texas 78557

Hidalgo Co.  
RE: Old M. L. Rodriguez Store  
663 E H32-NR

(TX)

4P  
Send  
Thanks

Dear Mr. C. A. Harrington:

I consider my self honored by yours of Oct 2nd inst. however I am sorry I was not able to reply sooner. Mr. Alonso and I, both retired, live upstairs, tryin to keep the house standing in good shape. We replaced the roof just before we received the Texas Historical Commission Nomination Notice. - We used the best cedar shingles as it was in the original roof. We wanted to keep the building in memory of my parents and now I feel that it really answers to the Historical value in the developing of this community. I have many answers in regards to this building but time is short and I want to get my reply by the time appointed.

Attached is copies of my reply to "Texas Historic Commission" and will appreciate your instructions in order to cooperate with you in doing the right thing for the right purpose.

Thanking you for your kind consideration, I am

Yours truly  
Dolores R. Alonso



THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF HISTORIC PLACES

DATE NOV 2 1979

AIR MAIL RESPONSE (ATTACHED)

COPY MATERIAL SENT

TELEPHONE CALL (ATTACHED)

DATE ACTION TAKEN \_\_\_\_\_

INITIALS \_\_\_\_\_

et/11 or

16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

17



Dolores R. Alonso  
P.O. Box 266  
Midalgo Texas  
78557

RE Old Rodriguez Store

Dear Miss Anderson:

Sorry it took me so long to reply to yours attached.

(1) & (2) The name was M. S. Rodriguez, General Merchandise - Established in 1916 on the present site of the building. My father (M. S. R.) used to sell Groceries, shoes, clothing, for the whole family, furniture, guns, machinery, gas oil etc. etc., his was the only store that could answer the needs of both sides of the "Rio Grande"

(3) I like to obtain more information concerning items underlined in (#3) in order to understand my privileges and obligations in case my house is registered

(4) Where can I find the information about items underlined?

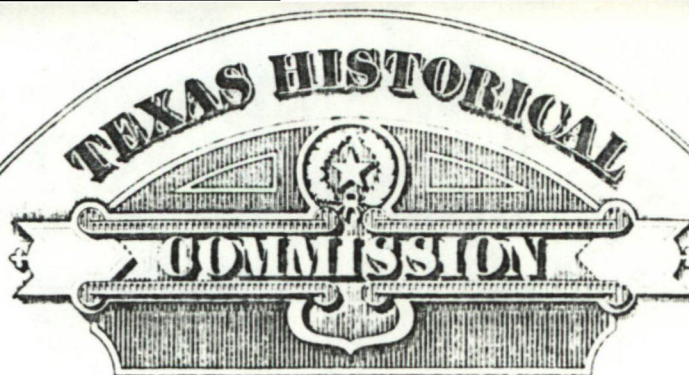
I have just received some circulars from the U.S. Department of the Interior and I am replying by this same mail with great appreciation for your kind consideration, I am

Yours truly

Dolores R. Alonso



TRUETT LATIMER  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



P. O. BOX 12276  
AUSTIN TEXAS 78711

July 24, 1979

① RE: Old Rodrigues Store

Dear Mrs. Dolores Alonzo:

② The above named site or structure was considered by the Board of Review for the State of Texas for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places and was approved for nomination at its meeting January 21, 1976.

③ The National Register, established by Congress in the Historic Preservation Act of 1966, was created to record the heritage of the nation as reflected in its architecture, archeological sites, and other historic places. The inclusion of an historic property on the National Register is primarily an inventory listing that in no way infringes upon the private property rights of the owners. National Register Properties may or may not be open to the public, at the discretion of the owner. In addition, the property's inclusion on the National Register qualifies it to receive a matching grant-in-aid for preservation or restoration through the Department of the Interior. The inclusion also gives it a measure of protection from destruction by any federally funded or licensed project, such as highway or reservoir construction.

④ With the passage of the Tax Reform Act of 1976, certain Federal tax consequences may result from listing in the National Register. Please refer to Section 2124 of that act concerning: depreciation, demolition, deduction for charitable contributions, etc.

Your assistance throughout completion of the nomination process will be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions or comments

*The State Agency for Historic Preservation*



Page Two  
July 24, 1979

concerning this selection process, please write to the Texas Historical  
Commission, National Register Department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lissa Anderson", written over the word "Sincerely,".

Lissa Anderson  
Coordinator  
National Register Nominations

LA/mc

Mrs. Dolores Alonzo  
Box 266  
Hidalgo, TX 78557



NAME OF PROPERTY Old Hidalgo Courthouse + Bldgs STATE Tx

Date Information Requested/Date Put in "Hold" Drawer: 1/16/80

Date to Be Pulled from "Hold" Drawer: 2/14/80  
(30 Days from Date Requested)

Information Requested From: Lissa Anderson

Information Requested/Reason Nomination Is Being Held:

*sketch maps to show clearly the location of the  
various bldgs in the discontinuous areas*

*rec'd - 1/30/80*

Beth Grosvenor  
Reviewer



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE TEXAS

Date Entered FEB 1 1980

Name

Location

Whitehall

Sutherland Springs vicinity  
Wilson County

Old Hidalgo Courthouse and Buildings

Hidalgo  
Hidalgo County

Also Notified

Honorable Lloyd M. Bentsen

Honorable John G. Tower  
Honorable Abraham Kazen, Jr.  
Honorable E. (Kika) de la Garza

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

NR Byers/bjr 2/5/80

For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-6401.