26. Name: Caldwell House

Location: 619 Maury Street

Classification: Category - building; Ownership - private; Status - occupied; Accessible - yes, restricted; Present use - private residence.

Owner of property: Fred and Lydia Feltner
619 Maury Street
San Marcos, Texas 78666

Description: Condition - good; Altered; Original site.

Applied to the simple L-form of the one-and-a-half-story Caldwell House with partial basement is a wealth of wooden Victorian detail. A three-bay porch under a shed roof, and a tiny porch at the ell's northeast wall under its own shed roof, are dominated by the steep hipped roof with cross gable covered in standing-seam metal and pierced by a single chimney at the peak.

The turned posts of the porch are bracketed by drilled and jigsawn triangles and rectangular panels, which are separated by spindles. Larger spindles form the rail. The smaller porch has a similar row of spindles and brackets under the eaves and also rests on turned posts. Both porch floors are of wood. In the ell's gable end is a small, diamond-shaped, attic window, fishscale windows, and a metal-sheathed pent. Wooden shingles are visible below the metal. The primary windows, including those on other walls, are topped by peaked, molded frames. Now painted, the Eastlake door is still in place.

Two floor-length windows with one-over-one lights open to the porch, one from the main block of the house, one from the ell. On the southeast wall the four sash windows with one-over-one lights are in two pairs; on the northwest, there is one pair. The only altered windows, small aluminum-frame openings, are in the southeast and northwest gable ends.

Previous owners added bathrooms to the rear, and the present owners enclosed the uneven outline to create a storage area. They also added a one-story den to the northwest and decorated it with old, rectangular, colored-glass windows. These additions are removable, but in the meantime, since they are of comparable materials and scale and are away from the main facade, they do not detract seriously from the historical integrity of the house.

An interesting feature of the interior is the separation of the foyer from the central hall by a pair of carved brackets. The two downstairs bedrooms have beaded walls and ceilings. There appears to have once been a door between the rooms, as the boards there are pieced together. Both bedrooms have an ornate fireplace. Most of the doors retain their bullseye moldings. The only nonsurficial alteration inside is the addition of a stair from the dining room to the four bedrooms created in the attic. Should the house ever be restored, removing the rather skeletal stair would be no problem.

The original garage is behind the house, next to a well-hidden swimming pool.

Significance: Period - 1800-1899; Areas of significance - architecture.
Specific dates - 1893. J. Pierce Caldwell, contractor.

The house at 619 Maury is the only well-preserved example remaining in San Marcos of the typical one-story, L-shaped Victorian house. Its porch trim is among the most delicate and attrative in town.

J.W. McBride sold the hillside to J. Pierce and Fannie Caldwell in 1893, the year the house was built. Caldwell was a local contractor, and evidently lavished great care on his home, because the details are outstanding. Although the house form is moderate, the jigsawn porch brackets, small ell porch, and peaked hood molds create an articulated facade.

Many structures of architectural merit are undistinguished for their history, and the Caldwell House is one of these. Among the names of the many people who owned the house prior to 1945 are Herndon, Heard, Driskill, Leinweber, Summy, McNeill, Haymes, Ramsay, and Smith. Little is known of their lives, as they relate to this property, but one story stands out. J. Alex Driskill and his wife bought the house in 1901. Driskill was an elder in the Church of Christ, where musical instruments were forbidden. When a small organ was installed, Driskill's mother, who lived with her son and daughter-in-law at 619 Maury, took a hatchet to the innocent instrument, saying "If there's going to be any noise made around here, Alex and I will make it." This incident had occurred in 1892 or 1893. The dispute caused a faction under J.L. Green's leadership to break off and form First Christian Church.

Less colorful, but more constructive, was the contribution of a veterinarian, J.A. Riley, who rented the house in the teens. The present owner's grandfather, A.C. Feltner, started the town's first soft-drink bottling plant in 1897.

Bibliography:

Abstract of Title.
San Marcos Record, March 16, 1967.
Deed Records of Hays County, vol. 75, pp. 75-77.
Historic Markers of Hays County, 1907-1976, p. 179.
Interview with Tula Townsend Wyatt, July 23, 1982.

Geographical data: Acreage - less than one acre.
UTM reference - F 14 / 601270 / 3306140

Verbal Boundary Description - J.C. Rogers Addition, Block 6, lots 1 and 2.

WASO Form - 177
("R" June 1984)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Caldwell House (San Marcos MRA)
Hays County
TEXAS

Working No. 7-14-83
Fed. Reg. Date: 2.7.84
Date Due: 8/31/83 - 8/28/83
Action: ✓ ACCEPT 8/26/83
___ RETURN
___ REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

Entered in the National Register

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

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ 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
☐ excellent ☐ deteriorated
☐ good ☐ ruins
☐ fair ☐ unexposed

Check one
☐ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one
☐ original site
☐ moved date _____

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: _____

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet

619

Historic Resources of San Marcos
San Marcos, Hays County, Texas
#26. Caldwell House

Photo by Lissa Anderson, August, 1982.
Negative property of HASM, on file at SMPL.

Northeast facade, camera facing southwest.
Photo 104 of 150.

Historic Resources of San Marcos
San Marcos, Hays County, Texas
#26. Caldwell House

Photo by Lissa Anderson, August, 1982.
Negative property of HASM, on file at SMPL.

North oblique, camera facing south
Photo 105 of 150.

Historic Resources of San Marcos
San Marcos, Hays County, Texas
#26. Caldwell House

Photo by Lissa Anderson, August, 1982.
Negative property of HASM, on file at SMPL.

Southeast facade, camera facing northwest.
Photo 106 of 150.

619

Historic Resources of San Marcos
San Marcos, Hays County, Texas
#26. Caldwell House

Photo by Lissa Anderson, August, 1982.
Negative property of HASM, on file at SMPL.

Detail of northeast facade, camera facing southwest.
Photo 107 of 150.

Please refer to the map in the Multiple Property Cover Sheet for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000853