

(Oct. 1990)

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
REGISTRATION FORM**

**1. NAME OF PROPERTY**

**HISTORIC NAME:** Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District

**OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER:** N/A

**2. LOCATION**

**STREET & NUMBER:** Roughly bounded by Southern Pacific Railroad tracks, Banita Creek, Pilar Street, Mound Street, Arnold Street, North Street, and Hospital Streets

**CITY OR TOWN:** Nacogdoches      **VICINITY:** N/A

**STATE:** Texas    **CODE:** TX      **COUNTY:** Nacogdoches

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION:** N/A

**CODE:** 347      **ZIP CODE:** 75963

**1. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this (☒ nomination) (☐ request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property (☒ meets) (☐ does not meet) the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant (☐ nationally) (☒ statewide) (☐ locally). (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Commission

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

☐ entered in the National Register

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register

☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register

☐ removed from the National Register

☐ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

**5. CLASSIFICATION****OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY:** Private, Public-local, Public-county**CATEGORY OF PROPERTY:** District**NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY:**

CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING	
91	37	<b>BUILDINGS</b>
0	1	<b>SITES</b>
3	2	<b>STRUCTURES</b>
94	40	<b>TOTAL</b>

**NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER:** 9**NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING:** NA**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

**HISTORIC FUNCTIONS:** COMMERCE: financial institution, specialty store, department store, professional, restaurant,  
GOVERNMENT: courthouse, post office/federal building, city hall, government office, fire station  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: processing, storage  
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: manufacturing facility  
DOMESTIC: hotel  
SOCIAL: meeting hall  
RELIGION: religious facility  
RECREATION AND CULTURE: theater

**CURRENT FUNCTIONS:**

COMMERCE: financial institution, specialty store, department store, professional, restaurant  
GOVERNMENT: courthouse, city hall, government office, fire station  
DOMESTIC: hotel  
RELIGION: religious facility  
LANDSCAPE: street furniture / object  
VACANT

**7. DESCRIPTION**

**ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION:** LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival  
LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Commercial  
MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne, International Style  
OTHER: One-part Commercial Block, Two-part Commercial Block

**MATERIALS:** FOUNDATION CONCRETE, STONE  
WALLS STUCCO, BRICK, WOOD, STONE, SHEET METAL  
ROOF ASPHALT, METAL  
OTHER CAST IRON, METAL/Pressed Tin, GLASS, CERAMIC TILE

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION** (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-16).

**8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE****APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA**

- ☒ **A** PROPERTY IS ASSOCIATED WITH EVENTS THAT HAVE MADE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE BROAD PATTERNS OF OUR HISTORY.
- ☐ **B** PROPERTY IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE LIVES OF PERSONS SIGNIFICANT IN OUR PAST.
- ☒ **C** PROPERTY EMBODIES THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF A TYPE, PERIOD, OR METHOD OF CONSTRUCTION OR REPRESENTS THE WORK OF A MASTER, OR POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUE, OR REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT AND DISTINGUISHABLE ENTITY WHOSE COMPONENTS LACK INDIVIDUAL DISTINCTION.
- ☐ **D** PROPERTY HAS YIELDED, OR IS LIKELY TO YIELD, INFORMATION IMPORTANT IN PREHISTORY OR HISTORY.

**CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS:** N/A

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:** Commerce, Architecture, Politics/Government

**PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE:** 1835-1958

**SIGNIFICANT DATES:** 1835, 1837, 1845, 1880, 1883, 1903, 1905, 1906, 1908, 1947, 1953-54.

**SIGNIFICANT PERSON:** N/A

**CULTURAL AFFILIATION:** N/A

**ARCHITECT/BUILDER:** Dietrich Rulfs; James Wetmore; Frank Rue;

**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE** (see continuation sheets 8-17 through 8-80).

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY** (see continuation sheets 9-81 through 9-84).

**PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS):** N/A

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☒ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
  - recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

**PRIMARY LOCATION OF ADDITIONAL DATA:**

- ☒ State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission*)
- ☐ Other state agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government: City of Nacogdoches Planning Office
- ☒ University: University of Texas, Barker Center for American History
- ☒ Other -- Specify Repository: Stephen F. Austin University Steen Library

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA****ACREAGE OF PROPERTY:** Approximately 79 acres**UTM REFERENCES** Zone 15

	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
1.	342610E	3498256N
2.	343054E	3498161N
3.	343295E	3498012N
4.	343329E	3497561N
5.	343295E	3497437N
6.	343032E	3497261N
7.	342586E	3497839N

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION** (see continuation sheet 10-85)**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION** (see continuation sheet 10-85)**11. FORM PREPARED BY****NAME/TITLE:** Monica Penick (narrative in Section 8 with assistance of Kate Holliday)**ORGANIZATION:** for City of Nacogdoches Planning Dept.**DATE:** April 2, 2008**STREET & NUMBER:** 4101 Sinclair Avenue**TELEPHONE:** (512) 426-3014**CITY OR TOWN:** Austin**STATE:** TX**ZIP CODE:** 78756**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION****CONTINUATION SHEETS****MAPS** (see continuation sheet Map-104)**PHOTOGRAPHS** (see continuation sheet Photo-105 through Photo-107)**ADDITIONAL ITEMS** (see continuation sheets 86 through 103)**PROPERTY OWNER****NAME:** ON FILE WITH TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION**STREET & NUMBER:****TELEPHONE:****CITY OR TOWN:****STATE:****ZIP CODE:**

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection 7 Page 5Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

The properties located within the Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District comprise the core of its historic commercial quarter and a portion of its former industrial sector. These buildings taken together represent significant aspects of the economic, physical and architectural development of Nacogdoches from approximately 1779 to the present day. As an 18<sup>th</sup> century military outpost and waypoint on the El Camino Real, Nacogdoches grew alongside a major historic transportation route and around a *plaza principal*. Further development occurred later in the twentieth century as the town expanded to the north, south, and west of the original site. Because the railroad came late to this county (1883) and was never a large factor in the town's physical growth, the associated industrial corridor remains somewhat apart from the central commercial district. Although Nacogdoches is the county seat of Nacogdoches County, the current court house is located just beyond the physical center of the town's commercial district; however, the court house remains a symbolic if not visual anchor to the western edge of downtown. Most properties within the Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District are one and two-part commercial block buildings constructed of brick. Other property types include a central block with wings (the former United States Post Office and Federal Building, Property #1), two early 20<sup>th</sup>-century gas stations, several residential structures (Functioning as commercial, hospitality, and residential properties), a Modernist "tall building" (Hotel Fredonia, Property #83), a railroad depot (Property #123), and four small concrete bridges. Architectural styles represent those most common in commercial construction during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, including Classical Revival, Commercial, and Moderne. While the earliest extant contributing building dates to 1835 (Durst-Taylor House, Property #100, NR 2003) and the most recent building dates to 2004 (Property #116), the majority of the properties within the district were constructed between 1890 and 1930. Construction, alterations, and modernization occurred throughout the period of significance (1835-1957), and reflect the changing physical needs and aesthetic preferences of commercial establishments. Alterations are typical of those made to many commercial properties in the middle decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and reflect the town's continued stability as well as its recognition of national architectural trends. Despite minor alterations and modernization, contributing properties retain the character-defining elements necessary to convey a visual sense of the historic environment of downtown Nacogdoches.

The nominated district is composed of approximately nineteen blocks. These vary in size and shape, and are laid out in an irregular grid pattern. The majority of the buildings within the district are oriented around the *plaza principal*, bordered by Pecan, Main, Fredonia, and Pillar Streets, or toward the East-West axis of town (Main Street or Highway 21). A small segment of the district lies along the North-South transportation artery (North and South Streets, or Highway 59). The district is roughly bounded by the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks on the west, to just beyond Mound Street on the east, and from Banita Creek on the south to Hospital Street to the north. A small segment of the district extends northward along North Street between Hospital and Baxter-Duncan Streets. These boundaries are consistent with the concentration of commercial properties that existed historically in Nacogdoches. There are 134 properties within the district, of which 94 are contributing (9 of these were previously listed on the National Register) and 40 are non-contributing. The percentage of contributing properties is 70%. The contributing resources retain integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location and association.

Located in Piney Woods region of central-east Texas approximately fifty miles west of the Louisiana border, Nacogdoches has had a long and varied civic history. Originally little more than an isolated military outpost for both the Spanish and French colonizers of North America, the town hosted an early Spanish mission and presidio built in 1716, and a small frontier trading post established in 1779. Upon the founding of the Republic of Texas fifty years later, Nacogdoches was named as the county seat for Nacogdoches County. Nacogdoches features prominently in state history of Texas as a significant waypoint on the old San Antonio Road, also known as the Kings' Highway or El Camino Real, and as the site of several important military battles connected with the Texas movement toward independence from

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

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 6

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

---

Mexico in the 1820s and 1830s. Nacogdoches was also home to many of the most revered figures in early Texas history, including Sam Houston and William Travis. Despite such historical importance, the town itself remained small and relatively undeveloped throughout its first 100 years. It was not until after the Civil War and the arrival of the railroad in 1883 that town experienced significant growth.

Little remains of ante-bellum Nacogdoches. The town does, however, owe its unusual layout to the informal planning of its Spanish colonial past rather than to the more typical 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century courthouse square plans implemented throughout Texas. Extant buildings from Nacogdoches's colonial past are rare; the Adolphus Sterne Home, located at 211 S. Lanana St. (NR 1976) is thought to be the earliest extant structure in Nacogdoches, dating to about 1830. The Durst-Taylor House (Property #100), within the National Register District, also dates to the mid-1830s. The majority of the building within the remainder of the downtown commercial district date from between 1890 to 1960. In general, large-scale construction efforts in Nacogdoches were concentrated in three periods: the first occurred in the 1880s and 1890s, as brick and masonry commercial properties replaced the original wood-frame business houses and shops along the main street; the second period began around 1910 and extended into the 1920s, as the diversified post-World War I economy became a force in Nacogdoches; the final stage of notable building activity occurred from approximately 1947 through the 1950s, when the booming post-World War II economy invigorated the community.

Because it existed on the border of French and Spanish colonial territories and played host to immigrants from the south and from the east coast, Nacogdoches has a diverse cultural heritage that is reflected in the extant buildings of its commercial district. While some are reflective of typical east Texas commercial architecture, the influence of Creole forms imported from Louisiana and points further east is evident, as well as the influence of the German brick-building tradition imported by the skilled German-born architect Dietrich Rulfs, who arrived in Nacogdoches in 1889. Nacogdoches's commercial district, with its meandering streets, irregular blocks, and diverse architecture, thus has an unusual character that distinguishes it clearly from other Texas towns.

The Nacogdoches Downtown District consists of portions of nineteen blocks, roughly extending from the railroad tracks on the west, to just beyond Mound Street on the east, and from Banita Creek on the south to Hospital Street to the north. A small segment of the district extends northward along North Street between Hospital and Baxter-Duncan Streets. The district is comprised primarily of commercial properties, housing both retail and civic functions, and includes several residential properties once associated with the commercial function of the downtown area. A number of large-scale factory complexes related to the agricultural, lumber, and manufacturing industries once prominent in the region are located directly to the south and west of the district across Banita Creek; these have not been included in the National Register district, but nevertheless played a notable role in the town's economic development. A second area of intense commercial development extends to the north of the National Register District, along the North Street corridor that connects the downtown area to the university district surrounding Stephen F. Austin State University. The proposed commercial district abuts several existing National Register Historic Districts to the north and east: Zion Hill, Washington Square, and Sterne-Hoya Districts. Together with the college campus, these districts form complete physical evidence of the economic, social, and architectural development of Nacogdoches in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

## **Setting and Description**

Nacogdoches is the county seat of Nacogdoches County, 939 square miles of plateaus, valleys and timberlands located in the eastern portion of Texas approximately fifty miles from the Louisiana border and the Sabine River. The county is

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 7

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

drained primarily by the Angelina River (in the west and south), and to the east by Attoyac Bayou.<sup>1</sup> Reaches of the Sam Rayburn Reservoir form portions of the county's southern boundary. Lumbering is among the main industries, and pine in particular has long been one of the most valuable natural resources in the region (cypress and oak are also present).<sup>2</sup> The fertile redland and sandy loam soils, mild climate, plentiful rainfall (Forty-five inches annually), long growing seasons (245 days) lend themselves to agricultural endeavors, and nearly one-quarter (or 21-30%) of the county's land is dedicated to farming.<sup>3</sup> Crops include hay, vegetables, and fruits. Ranching lands have produced beef and dairy cattle, poultry, and hogs. Other natural resources present in the region include petroleum: the first commercial oilfield in the Texas was located in Oil Springs, just 15 miles southeast of Nacogdoches, and shallow wells continue to yield a small production.<sup>4</sup> The county population is approximately 60,468, and Nacogdoches is the largest city with an estimated 2005 population of 30,806. The city is racially diverse, with 61.9% identified as White/Non-Hispanic, 25% identified as African-American or Black, 10.8% Hispanic, 0.7% Native American, and approximately 7% identified as "other" or "more than one race." Stephen F. Austin State University further contributes to the demographic diversity of the area, providing a population of over 10,000 students.

The town of Nacogdoches is located at the intersection of U. S. Highway 59 and State Highway 21, in the geographic center of Nacogdoches County. The city limits are approximately twenty-five miles square, and Loop 224 encircles the commercial and institutional areas of the city to allow for uninterrupted travel. U.S. Highway 59, known locally as North Street, runs north-south through the center of town, connecting Nacogdoches to Houston approximately 140 miles to the south. State Highway 21, or Main Street, runs east-west, approximating the historic route of the Old Kings' Highway, which connected Nacogdoches to San Antonio and points southwest. U.S. Highway 259 connects the city northward to Longview. Other nearby towns in Nacogdoches County include Garrison, Cushing, Appleby, and Chireno. Lufkin (Angelina County) is 27 miles to the south, and San Augustine (San Augustine County) is 35 miles to the east.

Nacogdoches, the largest city within the county, continually serves as the region's hub of educational, cultural and economic activity. The city is laid out in a compact yet irregular grid pattern, reflecting both the influences of natural topography and early trends in town planning dating to the Spanish colonial era. The town site was initially chosen for its role as the center of Caddo Indian activity in the region (as indicated by the surviving mortuary mound at 516 North Mound Street), as the earliest Spanish missions were generally planned in locations where contact between native populations and Europeans missionaries would be possible.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Banita Creek and Lanana are both tributaries of the Angelina River. See Table I, "Rivers and Streams of Nacogdoches County" in Partin, James Gallaway. "A History of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Texas to 1877." MA Thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1968: 6.

<sup>2</sup> Nacogdoches is particularly rich in members of the pine family, such as oldfield, shortleaf, loblolly, and longleaf yellow pine. Partin, James Gallaway. "A History of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Texas to 1877." MA Thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1968:7.

<sup>3</sup> For more information regarding the soils of Nacogdoches County, see Hendrickson, B.H. *et al. Soil Survey of Nacogdoches County, Texas*. United States Department of Agriculture Bureau of Chemistry and Soils Series, 1925, No. 24. Washington: 1925; Partin, James Gallaway. "A History of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Texas to 1877." MA Thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1968: 4; and *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v. "Nacogdoches County" <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/NN/hcn1.html>.

<sup>4</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v. "Nacogdoches County" <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/NN/hcn1.html>

<sup>5</sup> Gilbert R. Cruz, *Let There Be Towns: Spanish Municipal Origins in the American Southwest* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1988), 165.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 8

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

The core of historic downtown Nacogdoches is located on the north side of an elevated triangular site created by the confluence of the Lanana and Banita Creeks. A flood plain extends to the south of both creeks. The irregularly gridded street pattern survives from the late eighteenth century, with Main Street following a meandering east-west route that traces the crest of the elevated site above the Banita Creek. Attempts in the early nineteenth-century to straighten and regularize the streets and property lines in town were unsuccessful.<sup>6</sup>

The two main transportation routes in central Nacogdoches are Main Street and North/South Street. Their intersection does not, however, form the main focal point of the downtown area. Instead, the center of town was located further to the east, on the south side of Main Street between Fredonia and Pecan Streets. This central area was planned as a town square, or *plaza principal*, in the Spanish colonial era, though it never truly adhered to the principles of town planning advocated by the governors of New Spain. The irregular trapezoid square – which still retains its original form – was never intended as the forecourt to a civic building or institution, but has always been surrounded by streets lined with a mix of residential, commercial, and civic properties. The *plaza principal* remained undeveloped until 1917, when the United States Post Office and Federal Building (Property #1, 200 E. Main) was erected on the site.

The areas immediately surrounding the Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District are primarily residential. Many significant residences are found within close proximity of the downtown district, particularly in the blocks east of Mound and north of Main, and south of Pilar. These were home to some of Nacogdoches's most notable merchants, businessmen and professionals such as Adolphus Sterne, Eugene H. Blount, and Roland Jones. The area to the north of the district, particularly along North Street is primarily comprised of commercial and civic properties, including Stephen F. Austin State University, which are beyond the scope of the district or were constructed or altered beyond the district's period of significance. The area to the south of the district is comprised of a combination of industrial, commercial and residential properties that are of a different character from the commercial area north of the railroad tracks.

The Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District is primarily commercial in character. While most county seats in Texas adhere to various Texas Courthouse Square typologies, the Nacogdoches County Courthouse was not given prominence of the central, focal-point block, and the city retained its irregular pattern stemming from its founding during the Spanish colonial era. Throughout the core of the district, block sizes and the pattern of inter-block alleyways remain relatively irregular, and lots are not uniformly developed (FIG. 1). The majority of the earliest properties in Nacogdoches, such as the 1897 Hoya Land Office (Property #95) were constructed around the *plaza principal*. A second concentration of significant commercial properties emerged to the west of *plaza*, while properties directly adjacent to the railroad tracks and particularly those immediately west of the tracks were primarily related to industrial, agricultural and transportation activities.

---

<sup>6</sup> In 1827 an "effort (was) made to straighten the streets and lay off the public square and town lots in accordance with the Plan for the New Populations of the Government of Coahuila and Texas. According to the plan, the plaza was to be formed in a perfect square and to be called the Plaza of the Constitution, or Main Plaza. From it the streets were to run north and south, east and west, in straight lines, and to be widened to the distance of 20 varas. The plan further stated that the vacant part of the church plaza was to be reserved for a town hall, jail, and school....The citizens of Nacogdoches, however, complained loudly when the streets were straightened and the blocks were formed into squares. The new streets crossed some lots and left others without openings to a street. The irregularity of the town's streets today is mute evidence of the partial failure of this effort." Partin, "History of Nacogdoches," 145-46, source: Ramón Musquiz to the Ayuntamiento of Nacogdoches, 5 February 1828, and Jose Antonio Saucedo to the Alcalde of Nacogdoches, 23 August 1827, translation, Blake Collection, LXVII, 1-3.



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

# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 9

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

---

The majority of the buildings within the district were constructed between 1890 and 1930, although new construction and alterations to existing properties continued throughout the period of significance. The earliest extant building is a residential property dating to 1835 (Durst-Taylor House, Property #100), and the earliest commercial property dates from 1880 (though it was extensively altered in 1934; Property #17). Approximately two properties were built between 1881 and 1890, and 35 between 1891 and 1900. Between 1901 and 1910, an estimated 24 buildings were constructed. This number declined to 7 produced between 1911 and 1920, and 17 between 1921 and 1930. Only three new buildings were complete during the Depression years of 1931 and 1940, and only five more appeared between 1941 and 1950. Approximately 14 new buildings were constructed between 1951 and 1960, though several façade remodelings occurred during this time. Approximately 24 buildings within the historic district were constructed after 1961.

One-part and two-part commercial buildings are well-distributed within the district, though one-part buildings predominate. Approximately 51% (69) of all the buildings in the historic district can be classified one-part commercial blocks, with two-part commercial blocks representing 25% (34) of the building stock. Other building types include five warehouses and industrial buildings, one gas station, one tire and automotive service building, three contemporary buildings (two used as banking facilities and the third as the Police Department), two central blocks with wings (including the former United States Post Office and Federal Building, Property #1), and one temple-front church. There are five structures within the historic district, including four bridges over Banita Creek. One-story buildings are the most common within the district, with 56 examples; there are 22 one-and-one-half story buildings, 43 two-story buildings, and one building with six floors (Property #83, Hotel Fredonia).

### **Methodology for the Evaluation of Individual Properties within the District**

An intensive level survey of approximately 180 properties was conducted in the area bounded by Mims Street on the North, University on the east, Banita Creek to the South, and Old Tyler Road (and the railroad tracks) to the west. This area was identified as a potential historic district in August 2005 in response to a Request for Proposal and a Scope of Work provided to the consulting architectural historian (hereafter, the consultant) by the City of Nacogdoches Planning Department. The survey phase of the project began in January 2006, following the contractual agreements and initial project planning. The windshield survey, completed 11 January 2006, began with an initial inspection of the project area to characterize resources within the proposed district and to finalize plans for the more detailed survey effort. Field notes were abbreviated, as more detailed information was to be collected during the research phase and the intensive survey. The windshield survey enabled the consultant to determine the general character of the buildings, chose representative buildings and structures, and become familiar with the layout of the urban spaces. The preliminary boundaries of the proposed National Register District were set at this time. These proposed boundaries lie within the current Nacogdoches Historic District Overlay, but do not circumscribe the entirety of the existing Overlay.

After the completion of the windshield survey and an examination of historic maps and historic photographs, the consultant met with staff from the Texas Historical Commission to discuss the proposed district and boundaries. The THC's National Register Coordinator, Greg Smith, approved the consultant's initial recommendations for the proposed district and boundaries.

During the first week of April 2006, the consultant began the intensive survey. Together with archival research, the survey culminated in the development of a property inventory and served as the basis for evaluation of properties within the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 10

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

---

district. The survey provided physical descriptions for each property, a photographic record, and a basis for preliminary determination of architectural significance. Further archival research suggested significance in other areas, for example, revealing whether properties might be associated with historical events, trends, groups or individuals. Special attention was paid to features of each property that might reflect these various types of association.

The first task of the intensive survey involved creating a field survey map of the proposed historic district. The City of Nacogdoches Planning Office provided copies of plat maps and aerial maps which served as the basis for the field map created and used by the consultant. The City of Nacogdoches also provided a copy of a block and lot map. This map provided visual confirmation of both the physical location and legal description for each property. The legal description was confirmed with the use of an Excel spreadsheet provided by the City of Nacogdoches that contained the following information for each property: the Historic District or Overlay in which each property was located; street address; block and lot number; subdivision; and notes.

The survey area was then divided into units, generally consisting of one city block. Each unit was surveyed on foot, and all buildings, structures, sites and objects were assigned a project inventory or site number. The basic footprint of each building was drawn onto the field map (confirmed with the aid of the aerial photographs), and the location of objects, landscape elements were indicated on the same map. Each property was assigned a unique inventory number (keyed to the field map). Architectural descriptions and all other survey information were recorded on a standardized survey form that has been developed in consultation with the THC. Basic data included: the current name of the property or business housed at each address; historic names of the property; *situs* address; legal description; resource type; landscape or site features; function; construction date (actual or estimated); names of the architect and builder, when known; possible threats to the property; level of integrity; existing historic designations (RTHL, NR, etc.); and a physical description of the exterior of the property. The intensive survey generally documented the exteriors of buildings and the surrounding landscape; interiors of a number of buildings were also inspected where possible in order to identify significant features. Each property was then photographed with a color digital camera in high resolution. All photo data were recorded on the survey forms and correlated with the digital images. The field map, field survey cards and photographs were then compiled into a project binder that served as a reference tool during the course of the research phase. Representative images for each property were printed, in color, for inclusion in the field survey binder.

The survey and all supporting documentation provided the information necessary to evaluate the significance and integrity of the historic resource, and to determine whether each property contributed to the historic character of the district. The initial visual information was augmented during the archival research phase of the project, and preliminary assessments were subject to reevaluation.

The current physical appearance of each resource was checked against Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from 1885, 1891, 1896, 1900, 1906, 1912, 1922, 1929, and 1929-1946 to verify year of construction, and any additions or alterations. Dates of construction were established through records at the Nacogdoches County Tax Assessor's Office, city directories, newspaper articles, and Sanborn Maps. Historic and aerial photos from various dates were also used to check the physical appearance of the district. Photographs, historic postcards and other visual material available through the East Texas Research Center at the Steen Library at Stephen F. Austin State University proved useful in documenting the historic form of numerous buildings, as well as demolitions and renovations that have occurred in recent years. Research on the history and development of Nacogdoches, individual properties and significant individuals was conducted at the Barker Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, and the East Texas Research Center, which has

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 11

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

---

a significant holding of historic materials. A great deal of information was collected from back issues of the *Daily Sentinel* from as early as 1906, as well as the *Weekly Sentinel* and other papers. Building histories were also compiled using existing National Register nominations for individual properties, and several files for Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks housed at the Texas Historical Commission.

The district was evaluated using the following considerations: the area as a whole contained a high concentration of historic properties that remain intact; there are a few examples of infill architecture that disrupt the feeling and setting of the district; and the properties within the district reflect aspects of the historical development of the downtown commercial district from the late 1800s to the present. The evaluation of a commercial district is complicated by the economic necessity to modernize facilities so that an area can maintain its viability. These types of alterations, which include both building and street infrastructure, are accepted as necessary and part of the development of any town. When these alterations are made within the period of significance and remain sensitive to the historic character of the individual property and the district as a whole, they do not detract from a resource's integrity. Integrity of location, setting, feeling, association and design were considered to be the most important aspects for this district. The individual components of design, materials and workmanship were considered in terms of hierarchical importance and visual impact. Building facades were considered as two parts – the lower section consisting of the storefront, and the upper section consisting of the either the upper level of a one-part commercial block (containing cornice, parapet, etc.) or full second or third floors of two-part commercial blocks. The following components were examined and aided in the determination of a building's contributing or noncontributing status: materials used on the ground floor; materials used on the upper portion or upper floors; fenestration patterns on the ground floor; fenestration patterns on the upper floors; entryway; configuration of overall storefront components; awning (or indication of historic placement); cornice; parapet; architectural ornament and detailing; overall massing, composition and form. Many of the resources within the district have undergone alterations such as the replacement of original windows, doors and storefronts, the replacement or removal of historic awnings or the support systems for these awnings, the replacement or removal of historic materials, the removal of exterior treatments such as historic stucco or paint, and the application of non-historic façade treatments such as stucco, stucco panels, colored glass panels or ceramic tiles. These alterations are common, often fall within the period of significance, and frequently do not detract from the overall historic character of a resource. The cumulative effects of such changes were evaluated for each resource and these changes did not automatically render a building noncontributing. Buildings that exhibited changes to a majority of the character-defining features or had irreversible alterations were considered noncontributing even if these buildings retained integrity of setting, feeling and association. Reversible alterations, such as the replacement of original windows or temporary blocking of windows or doorways, were evaluated in terms of their visual impact. As was often the case, smaller resources could not withstand numerous alterations (reversible or not) and retain their historic character, as is the case of Property #66 and #67 (FIG. 2). Larger, more substantial properties such as the Mayer-Schmidt Building (Property #34) or the M.G. Hazle Building (Property #41) could undergo a number of physical alterations, such as the modernization of the ground floor store front, and still retain integrity of design (FIG. 3). Integrity was not substantially disturbed in these cases, primarily because other significant features such as bay delineation, cornice line and parapet remained intact. Industrial buildings (such as those along Commerce Street or Old Tyler Road) were considered primarily in terms of location, association, setting, feeling and design footprint, as the very nature of these building types necessitates frequent change in materials and workmanship is not always evident. Character-defining features for industrial buildings were determined in accordance to "A Field Guide to Industrial Properties in Texas," authored by Amy E. Dase and published by the Texas Department of Transportation in May 2003. While some properties suffered from poor or deteriorating physical condition, this for the most part did not detract from integrity. Aside from deteriorating historic materials, the primary threat to historic properties was vacancy or boarded

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

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 12Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

windows and doorways; again, this rarely detracted from the historic character of most buildings and in many cases would be easily repairable or reversible. Buildings less than 50 years of age were considered non-contributing.

Upon completion of the survey and archival research, a color-coded map was created for the survey area denoting the contributing and noncontributing resources (MAP 1: Historic District). Final district boundaries were confirmed in consultation with the City of Nacogdoches Planning Office and staff at the Texas Historical Commission. The boundaries were drawn to include the highest number of contributing resources, the fewest number of noncontributing resources and fewest number of vacant lots. The following is a list of the properties within the district and their contributing or noncontributing status.

Site #	Address	Current Name	Previous Names	Date	Type	C/NC
1	200 E. Main	Visitor's Center	Post Office / Federal Building	1917	central block with wings	C
2	201 E. Main	Kennedy's	Weeks Drug; Schindler Drug and Jewelry (1912); Kennedy Drug and Jewelry (1915); Kennedy Jewelry (1944);	1907	two part	C
3	203 E. Main	Judge Jack Pierce Mediation Center	Hardeman / Boyet's Jewelry	1907	two part	C
4	207 E. Main	vacant	Boyet's Jewelry	1907	two part	C
5	209 E. Main	vacant		1907	two part	C
6	215 E. Main	Commercial Bank of Nacogdoches	was site of EA Blount Building (1907), but this was demolished	1972	contemporary	N
7	300 E. Main	Regions Bank Stone Fort	since 1919, site of Stone Fort Bank; previously housed Farmer's and Merchants bank (merger 1919).	1965	contemporary	N
8	216 E. Pillar	General Mercantile & Olde Time String Shop		1906	one part	C
9	214 E. Pillar	Municipal Building / Fire		1953	two part	C
10	210 E. Pillar	Old Pillar Street Antiques	Ingraham Building	1897	two part	C
11	204 E. Pillar	Story-Wyatt Office Supply	Mahdeen's/Wyatt's Office City	1918	two part	C
12	202 E. Pillar	City Hall	Liberty Hotel/Hampton Building	1891	two part	C
13	112 S. Pecan	vacant	Hoya Building / Firestone	1900	two part	C
14	114 S. Pecan	Richard S. Fischer Law Offices	WZ Weems Building / Hoya Building	1900	one part	N
15	110 S. Pecan	Heart of Texas Gift Gallery	First National Bank / Royal Movie Theater	1890	one part	C
16	108 S. Pecan	Jinkins Feed Store		1890	one part	C
17	106 S. Pecan		Mayer-Schmidt / Zeve Mercantile / Summers Furniture/ JC Penney	1880/1934	two part	C
18	104 S. Pecan	Pocket Park (empty lot)		0	lot	N

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Section 7 Page 13

Site #	Address	Current Name	Previous Names	Date	Type	C/NC
19	124 E. Main	vacant	Wettermark Bank / Kennedy Drug	1896	two part	C
20	112 E. Main		Hayter Office Building	1906	two part	C
21	100 E. Main	Johnson Furniture		1900	one part	C
22	100 E. Main	Johnson Furniture		1900	one part	C
23	100 E. Main	Johnson Furniture		1900	one part	C
24	100 E. Main	Johnson Furniture		1900	one part	C
25	100 E. Main	Johnson Furniture	RD Whitaker	1905	one part	C
26	106 E. Main	Johnson Furniture		1953	one part	C
27	113 E. Main	McLain's Antiques		1900	one part	C
28	115 E. Main	Shaw's		1900	one part	C
29	119 E. Main	Wharton's Telephone / Lone Star State Telephone		1900	one part	C
30	123 E. Main	Eirial's	Cox Building / Turner-Sitton Hardware/Branch-Patton Hardware	1888	two part	C
31	Pecan Street		Cox Building (1909) / Tausig Tobacco	1909	two part	C
32	Pecan Street		Tire Service / Automotive	1929	one part	C
33	Pecan Street		warehouse in rear	1896/	one part	N
34	305 E. Main	Adams, Belanger, Atherton & Lostracco (attorneys)	Mayer & Schmidt	1908	two part	C
35	311 E. Main	Andrews & Andres Attorney at Law		1908	two part	C
36	317 E. Main	Cason Monk Hardware		1908/1950	two part	C
37	321 E. Main	Top Drawer Resale		1908	one part	N
38	323 E. Main	Glass Castles		1908	one part	C
39	325 E. Main	Creative Photography		1908	one part	C
40	3xx E. Main	vacant	Cason / Opera House / site of Mitchell Hotel (1831)	1889	two part	C
41	401 E. Main	vacant	MG Hazle	1901	two part	C
42	405 E. Main	Downtown Arts		1900	one part	C
43	407 E. Main	Art on Main		1900	one part	C
44	409 E. Main	Diamond Trophy		1900	one part	C
45	413 E. Main	Sloane's Antiques		1900	one part	C
46	503 E. Main	Goodwill		1951	one part	C
47	517 E. Main	Main Theater	Main Theater	1951	one part	C
48	519 E. Main	coffee shop		1951	one part	C
49	510 E. Main	University Rental	Brookshire's	1930	one part	C
50	510 E. Main	University Rental	n/a	2000	Butler	N
51	424 E. Main	Edward Jones Investments	n/a	1980	domestic	N
52	422 E. Main	Wrap it Up	n/a	1906	two part	C
53	420 E. Main			1906	two part	N

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

# National Register of Historic Places

## Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 14Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Site #	Address	Current Name	Previous Names	Date	Type	C/NC
54	418 E. Main	Memories		1955	one part	C
55	412 E. Main	Woodmen of the World	Woodmen of the World	1923	two part	C
56	408 E. Main	Toledo Finance		1900/1960	one part	N
57	406 E. Main	Lite Fare		1900	one part	C
58	404 E. Main	House of Versailles		1900	one part	C
59	402 E. Main			1906	one part	C
60	400 E. Main	Good Book		1906	one part	C
61	330 E. Main	Godtel	Redland Hotel	1906	two part	C
62	322 E. Main	Greer's		1906	two part	N
63	320 E. Main	Fortney's		1906/1940	two part	C
64	318 E. Main	Main Street Antique Mall		1900	two part	N
65	316 E. Main	Brick Street Antiques		1900/1947	two part	C
66	312 E. Main	House of Traditions		1900	one part	N
67	312 E. Main	House of Traditions		1900	one part	N
68	301-305 Commerce	Bowers Overhead Door Company	Cotton Exchange / Mast Office	1898	two part	C
69	xx Commerce	Cason Monk Hardware		1896	one part	C
70	xx Commerce	Cason Monk Hardware		1950	one part	C
71	xx Commerce	Cason Monk Hardware		1910	one part	C
72	117 N. Church		CD Thomson	1904	one part	C
73	106 N. Church		Bailey Block	1900	two part	C
74	108 N. Church		Bailey Block	1900	one part	C
75	110 N. Church	Milford's Barber Shop	Bailey Block	1900	one part	C
76	112 N. Church	vacant	Bailey Block	1900	one part	C
77	116 N. Church	Cottage Kitchen Shop	Bailey Block	1900	one part	C
78	118 N. Church	The Old Warehouse	Bailey Block	1900	one part	C
79	122 N. Church	Julia's Salon	Bailey Block	1900	two part	N
80	xx N. Church	Fare, Hooper & Lamb Gallery	Hunt Building	1958	one part	C
81	141 N. Church	Jones House Bed & Breakfast	Jones House	1895	domestic	C
82	310 E. Hospital	Price Electronics	Greyhound Bus /	1953	one part	C
83	200 N. Fredonia	Hotel Fredonia		1953	two part	C
84	xx E. Hospital	Fountain		1960	object	N
85	135 N. Fredonia	Nacogdoches Abstract & Title		1980	one part	N
86	125 N. Fredonia	Milam Lodge No. 2	Milam Lodge No. 2	1931	two part	C
87	xx Pecan	Bank (ATM Kiosk)		1972	structure	N
88	xx E. Hospital	First Methodist Church		1952/1969	temple-front	C
89	118 E. Hospital	Mize Department Store		1961	two part	C
90	112 North Street	Expert Tire		1961	one part	N

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

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 15Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Site #	Address	Current Name	Previous Names	Date	Type	C/NC
91	104 North Street	Simpson Realtors / Pine Windsart & Fashion Shop		1961	one part	N
92	115 North Street	Tim James Attorney		1985	domestic	N
93	203 South Street			1972	one part	N
94	108 E. Pillar	Johnson Appliance Center / Fisher Cabinet Works		1929	one part	C
95	118 E. Pillar	Hoya Land Office		1897	one part	C
96	214 S. Fredonia	Maria Davidson Apartments		1928	domestic	C
97	xx Church	associated with Greer	City Hotel	1906	two part	N
98	204 North Street	Edward Jones Investments		1955	one part	C
99	212 North Street	The Medicine Shoppe		1985	one part	N
100	304 North Street	Durst-Taylor House		1835	domestic	C
101	320 North Street	Williamsburg Plaza	First State Bank	1980	central block with wings	N
102	412 North Street	Old Mize Factory	Mize Factory	1938	one part	C
103	111 W. Pillar	Tim James Attorney	house	1930	domestic	C
104	201 W. Pillar	Ford's Photography Studio	Banita Apartments	1920	domestic	C
105	206 W. Pillar	Nacogdoches Probation Office Community Service Building		1950	one part	C
106	208 W. Pillar	Environmental Health and Maintenance		1950	one part	C
107	206 W. Pillar	District Probation		1980	one part	N
108	101 W. Main	Nacogdoches County Courthouse	Site of Several other courthouses	1958	one part	C
109	203 W. Main	Nacogdoches County Annex	Bottling Company / Old Creamery Building	1921	one part	N
110	317 W. Main			1925	one part	C
111	321 W. Main	Supergym		1925	one part	N
112	321 W. Main	Supergym		1925	one part	N
113	401 W. Main	Banita Creek Hall		1925	one part	C
114	xx W. Main	Bridge over Banita Creek at W. Main		1918/1941	structure	C
115	107 Pearl Str.	Farmer's Market/Weigh Station	Farmer's Market	1930	one part	C
116	312 W. Main	Nacogdoches Police Dept.	Nacogdoches Police Dept.	2004	contemporary	N

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection 7 Page 16Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Site #	Address	Current Name	Previous Names	Date	Type	C/NC
117	107 North Street	Rudy's Mobil Gas Station		1980	gas station	N
118	113 North Street	Covenant Life Church		1955	one part	C
119	115 North Street	Praxair		1955	one part	N
120	117 North Street	Landmark Center		1955	one part	N
121	418 W. Main			1930	one part	C
122	428 W. Main	Depot Chevron Gas Station	Gas / Service / Auto?	1930	gas station	C
123	500 W. Main	Southern Pacific Railroad Depot		1911	rail	C
124	223 W. Main	Morrison Supply company	American Supply Company	1975	industrial	N
125	211 Old Tyler	Clear Springs Café		1920	industrial	C
126	211 Old Tyler	Auntie Pasta's		1920	industrial	C
127	243 Old Tyler	Hancocl Advertising		1920	industrial	N
128	300 Old Tyler	House	house	1930	domestic	N
129	306 Old Tyler	house	house	1930	domestic	N
130	3xx Old Tyler	Kingman Construction		1980	industrial	N
131	xx Pecan	Bridge over Banita Creek @ Pecan	WPA bridge	1941	structure	C
132	xx Fredonia	Bridge over Banita Creek @ Fredonia	bridge	1940	structure	C
133	xx W. Pillar	Bridge over Banita Creek at Pillar Street	bridge	1940	structure	N
134	217 Hospital			1980	one part	N



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 17

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

The Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District represents the core of commercial activity and economic development in Nacogdoches since the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Founded in 1716 as Mission Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Nacogdoches and re-established in 1779 by Gil Antonio Ibarvo as a permanent center of trade, Nacogdoches eventually emerged as the home of several figures prominent in the establishment in the Republic of Texas, a county seat once statehood was achieved, and a regional center of agriculture and commerce. The initial platting of the town site in 1779, the subsequent founding of the first businesses, and the completion of the first rail line in 1883 were decisive events in the town's initial development. Although the town plat dating from 1779 is virtually intact, the earliest extant building within the district is dated to 1835 (Property #100, Durst-Taylor House), and the earliest commercial structure is dated to 1880 (Property #17, 106 S. Pecan, Mayer-Schmidt Building, with extensive alterations in 1934). Thus 1835 marks the beginning of the historic district's period of significance for the purpose of listing in the National Register of Historic Places. By 1883, the Houston, East & West Texas Railroad (HE & WT) began to transform Nacogdoches into a regional trade center and shipping point of consequence; the arrival of the Texas & New Orleans line (an affiliate of the Southern Pacific) in 1902 and the Nacogdoches & Southeastern in 1905 solidified the town's stature as an important transportation hub linking the economies of the town and outlying rural agricultural areas. Nacogdoches not only became a center for processing and transportation of cotton and lumber in Nacogdoches County, but came to host numerous commercial endeavors including banking houses, retail establishments, small scale industry and manufacturing.

The Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District played a significant and varied role as a commercial and economic center of the region, as well as the seat of county government, and is therefore eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under a number of Criteria. The Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District is eligible for listing under Criterion A at the state level of significance, in the area of Commerce at the state level of significance for its role in cotton production and distribution within the county, a center of East Texas Lumber industry, and as a host to numerous influential wholesale, retail and industrial establishments. The district is also eligible for listing under Criterion C at the state level of significance in the area of Architecture as an intact sampling of late 19th and 20th century commercial buildings that are reflective of local and national architectural trends during the period of significance (1835-1957).

## Immigration, Settlement, and Community Organization in Nacogdoches prior to 1779

Prior to European settlement of the region, the area that would become Nacogdoches was home to the Nacogdoche Indians of the Caddo Indian confederation, who built lodges and mounds along the Banita and Lanana Creeks. One of these mounds survives today, located at 516 Mound Street. Though occupation of the region dates to the Archaic Period (ca. 5000 B.C.-A.D. 500), archeological investigation indicates that surviving Caddo mounds date to approximately 1250.<sup>7</sup>

The first European presence dates to 1687, when René Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, led an expedition from French-held Louisiana to explore areas to the west.<sup>8</sup> Though the region was officially under Spanish rule at this time, it was

<sup>7</sup> Handbook of Texas Online, s.v. "NACOGDOCHES, TX," <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/NN/hdn1.html> (accessed June 3, 2006).

<sup>8</sup> Claims have been made that Hernando De Soto came as far as Nacogdoches in 1541, though the evidence is scant (For this, see R.B. Blake's *Historic Nacogdoches*(1939: 4). The date of the Sieur de La Salle's visit hinges upon the survival of specific descriptions of Nacogdoches, which were dated to 1685 in R.B. Blake's *Historic Nacogdoches*(1939: 4), but were subsequently thought to be from 1687. For this later dating, see *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v. "NACOGDOCHES, TX."

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 18

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

largely neglected, and the French sought to regularize a trade relationship with the native tribes who resided in the northeastern portions of Spanish territory. In an effort to prevent further incursions by the French, the Spanish governors of this part of New Spain (or, Mexico) became interested in establishing a presence along the border of French territory (roughly, what would become the western border of Louisiana). This resulted in the Spanish mapping of El Camino Real, also known as the Old San Antonio Road, the King's Highway, and the San Antonio-Nacogdoches Road.<sup>9</sup> Between 1690 and 1693, the route was mapped by three expeditions. The first was led by Alonso De León in 1690; the second took place in 1691 and was headed by Domingo Terán de los Ríos (the first governor of Texas); the final expedition departed in 1693, led by Gregorio de Salinas Varona, who became the first to travel directly from the Rio Grande to the missions in East Texas.<sup>10</sup> Stretching nearly 700 miles, the Camino Real began at the border in Coahuila (Mexico), and passed through San Antonio and Nacogdoches, to end in Natchitoches, Louisiana (FIG. 4). Once established, the Camino Real became a conduit through which supplies and military support were provided for the missions, a means by which Spanish-Mexican traders and officials attended to their holdings in East Texas, and by the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a route for cattle drives and immigration. All of these activities, with the network of trails that supported the Camino Real, encouraged the development of Nacogdoches.<sup>11</sup>

Though a route through East Texas was roughly established by the Camino Real, the first attempts to permanently settle the region did not occur until 1716. At this time, the Spanish Captain Domingo Ramón led an expedition to establish a series of missions and presidios along the Camino Real. Arriving in Nacogdoches in July 1716, he officially charged the Franciscan *padre* Antonio Margil de Jesús with possession of the newly-founded Mission Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Nacogdoches. Consisting only of a log church and a few houses for missionaries, the mission complex was probably located near the intersection of present-day North Street and Muller Street, just north of downtown Nacogdoches.<sup>12</sup> Mission Nuestra Señora was part of a new string of regional missions which included Concepción de los Hainai (1716), San José de Nazones (1716), Nuestra Señora de los Dolores de los Ais (1716), and San Francisco de los Neches (1721). Although a significant effort was made with these new missions, they failed to flourish. By 1719, less than three years after their founding, war broke out between the Spanish and French, and the Spanish were forced to temporarily abandon their missionary activity.<sup>13</sup>

In 1721, an expedition led by the Marqués of San Miguel de Aguaya, governor of Coahuila, reached Nacogdoches and successfully expelled the French, forcing them back to the frontier outpost of Natchitoches.<sup>14</sup> Soon after, the missions of Texas were reopened, again under Spanish control. Still, a general neglect and lack of continual immigration rendered the missions stagnant, and communities remained undeveloped. Early land grants made in Nacogdoches indicate that

<sup>9</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v. "Camino Real."

<sup>10</sup> A. Joachim McGraw, John W. Clark, Jr., and Elizabeth A. Robbins, eds., *A Texas Legacy: The Old San Antonio Road and the Caminos Reales* (Austin: Texas State Department of Highways and Public Transportation, 1991) and *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v. "OLD SAN ANTONIO ROAD," <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/OO/exo4.html> (accessed May 5, 2006).

<sup>11</sup> The Camino Real, officially surveyed and mapped by V. N. Zivley in 1929 under the auspices of the Texas Legislature and the Daughters of the American Revolution, now largely exists as part of State Highway 29. *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v. "OLD SAN ANTONIO ROAD."

<sup>12</sup> McDonald, *Nacogdoches: Wilderness Outpost to Modern City*, 14.

<sup>13</sup> Partin, "History of Nacogdoches," 35-36.

<sup>14</sup> Partin, "History of Nacogdoches," 37.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 19

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

although land was indeed parceled out, few settlers actually made their way to this northeastern-most corner of the Spanish frontier during the first decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>15</sup>

As the Spanish gained full control of the Louisiana territories from France in 1767, tensions over the control of the Louisiana-Texas border were reduced, and the need for settlement in the region was fully reassessed. When Padre Gaspar José de Solís visited the Nacogdoches mission in 1768, he found only a few neat but aging buildings and a settlement occupied by the padre, two soldiers and their families, and a “few half-breed servants.”<sup>16</sup> In the same year, the Marques de Rubí made an inspection trip of the mission, writing: “In this vast area (of East Texas) there was not a settlement or semblance of one, nor hope of any being established, until one reached Nacogdoches. There a lonely mission, aided by a few soldiers and an occasional Indian, eked a miserable existence, with hope in Providence undimmed.”<sup>17</sup> As a result of the observations by Solís and Rubí, the viceroy Antonio María de Bucareli y Ursúa issued the “New Regulations for Presidios,” (1772) which recalled all missionaries and settlers back to San Antonio.<sup>18</sup> A military expedition sent from Governor Juan Maria Vicencio de Ripperda in San Antonio enforced the viceroy’s order, causing a few Spanish settlers to flee to Natchitoches and others to surreptitiously join neighboring native settlements. By 1773, the tiny Nacogdoches mission was once again abandoned.<sup>19</sup> Still, over the next few years, some of the dispersed settlers returned to the vicinity of Nacogdoches and the French began to make new forays into “abandoned” Spanish territories.

## “Gateway to Texas”: Nacogdoches Settlement and Community Organization 1779 to 1835

Nacogdoches owes its renaissance in 1779 to the efforts of a single man, Gil Antonio Ibarvo. Ibarvo (alternately spelled Ybarbo) was the son of Spanish colonists from Andalusia, born in 1729 in Los Adaes, a small settlement located between Nacogdoches and Natchitoches. He was a successful trader among the French, Spanish, and regional native tribes, and despite the recent governmental decrees to vacate the territory, was loathe to abandon his property and business.<sup>20</sup> Soon after the Spanish viceroy’s rulings of 1772, he petitioned Ripperda, still the Spanish Governor, to reestablish a settlement in the area of Nacogdoches. Permission was eventually granted and in April 1779 Ibarvo returned with a small group of Spanish-Mexican settlers.<sup>21</sup> The Spanish government appointed him the Captain of the Militia and Lieutenant Governor

<sup>15</sup> See for example, the 1792 description of the grant of a town lot in Nacogdoches to Juan José Sanches in R. B. Blake, “Locations of the Early Spanish Missions and Presidio in Nacogdoches County”, Volume 41, Number 3, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly Online*, [http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/publications/journals/shq/online/v041/n3/contrib\\_DIVL4440.html](http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/publications/journals/shq/online/v041/n3/contrib_DIVL4440.html) (Accessed Sun Jun 4 14:09:41 CDT 2006).

<sup>16</sup> Partin, “History of Nacogdoches,” 53-54.

<sup>17</sup> Partin, “History of Nacogdoches,” 56.

<sup>18</sup> McDonald, Archie. “Early Spanish Involvement in Nacogdoches: Missions” In McDonald, *Nacogdoches*, 17.

<sup>19</sup> Partin, “History of Nacogdoches,” 57; *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v. “NACOGDOCHES, TX,” <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/NN/hdn1.html> (accessed January 13, 2006).

<sup>20</sup> By 1772, Ibarvo already had considerable trade relations, particularly with prominent merchants along the Mississippi. Along with his business, he had property in Los Adaes, and a large ranch, or *pueblo*, called Lobanillo, along the Sabine River near the mission of Dolores de los Ais. See Crocket, *Two Centuries in East Texas*(47).

<sup>21</sup> The settlers under Ibarvo, many of them from his home village of Los Adaes (Louisiana), left San Antonio for their former homes in about 1773, but were not permitted to travel as far as Nacogdoches. They settled on the Trinity River in near what became the northern boundary of Walker County, and established a presidio named Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Bucareli, with Ibarvo as captain of the militia and Justica Mayor, and Gil Flores as lieutenant. By 1779, Commanche threats, fires, and flood forced the settlers eastward toward the abandoned missions and to Nacogdoches. See Crocket *Two Centuries in East Texas*, 51.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 20

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

of the Pueblo of Nacogdoches with a salary of 500 pesos a year.<sup>22</sup> For nearly two decades, Ibarvo was the “gentle despot” of Nacogdoches, set with the task of writing the first codes of law, organizing community structure, issuing grants of land (verbally), and acting as an ambassador and regulator of trade with not only the Spanish ruling body in Mexico, but the French in Louisiana, and most significantly, with the native Indian population.

Upon his relocation to Nacogdoches in 1779, Ibarvo established a new town site at a slight distance from the original mission. His initial plan followed the Spanish model of creating a central plaza, or *plaza principal*, around which the remainder of the settlement would be situated. Within the new town plan, Ibarvo was careful to observe the path of the Camino Real and other existing travel routes. Intended as the primary location for governmental buildings and commercial establishments, the original *plaza principal* had corners to the northwest, northeast, southwest, and southeast. A secondary plaza was designated nearby (at the intersection of present-day West Main and North Streets) to serve the religious community then consisting of a Catholic church and cemetery.

With the settlers’ return, Ibarvo’s leadership, and the support of the Spanish colonial government, Nacogdoches was finally set to become more than an isolated mission. The town soon established itself as an important center of trade between the Spanish, the native tribes, and the French in Natchitoches. Ibarvo’s venture was thus the first successful permanent settlement in the area. In addition to resuming trade, settlers began to cultivate corn, beans, squash and peas. Crude palisade-type homes, often lacking floors and windows, were erected in close proximity to the settlement.<sup>23</sup> By 1788, Pedro Vial, a French explorer employed by the Spanish, declared that Nacogdoches “contained some 80 or 90 houses and a population of about 250 persons, most of whom were Spanish and French.”<sup>24</sup> A 1790 census documented 480 persons, and a 1791 census claimed that Nacogdoches was home to 504 residents: “172 men, 123 women, 98 boys, 93 girls, and 18 slaves.”<sup>25</sup>

In addition to producing the original plat, Ibarvo began to plan his own residence. The two-story house was located at the corner of the *plaza principal* (at present-day Main and North Fredonia Streets), and was constructed of native stone measuring up to almost a yard in thickness. Known as the “Old Stone House” or the “Stone Fort,” the building was erected around 1779 to be used primarily as Ibarvo’s home and trading post, though in the coming decades it would also serve as a court house, general store, printing office, saloon, and shelter during military activities (FIG. 5).<sup>26</sup> Ibarvo’s use of stone for his home and place of business indicates two very important things: one, that he intended the settlement to be permanent; and two, that in the absence of military support (which would come in small amounts by 1794), he felt a strong need for fortification. The Stone Fort survived until 1901, when it was torn down to make way for a newer commercial structure. The stones, however, were salvaged for a reconstruction of the building on the campus of Stephen F. Austin State University, executed under the auspices of the Texas Centennial Commission in 1936 (FIG. 6).

<sup>22</sup> Partin, *History of Nacogdoches*, 71. He held this position for nearly two decades, granting verbal lands, establishing and administering the judicial system, and overseeing friendly commerce with neighboring natives. Ibarvo was forcibly removed from his post in sometime between 1792 and 1794, due to charges of “illegal trading activities” and allegations regarding the legality of his verbal land grants. See Partin 74; and James McReynolds, “Spanish Nacogdoches” in McDonald, *Nacogdoches*, 20.

<sup>23</sup> These homes were described as being constructed from small trees laced together with vines and coated with an insulating layer of mud. Roofs were shingled, and stick-and mud fireplaces provided heating during the colder months. For more on the living conditions in early Nacogdoches, see James McReynolds, “Spanish Nacogdoches” in McDonald, *Nacogdoches*, 21.

<sup>24</sup> Partin, *History of Nacogdoches*, 91.

<sup>25</sup> Crocket, *Two Centuries in East Texas* (57).

<sup>26</sup> For this construction date, see Partin 73, and his reference to the Blake Collection, XXVIII:363.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection 8 Page 21Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Following Ibarvo's removal from office (and from Nacogdoches) in late 1791 on charges of illegal trade and land granting, there was no "permanent official" to succeed him in either matters of governance or trade.<sup>27</sup> In an effort to extend Ibarvo's activities, William Barr and Peter Davenport founded the House of Barr and Davenport. Established in 1798 and housed in the Stone Fort, the firm attempted to control trade between Spanish Mexico and Louisiana much as Ibarvo had subtly done. Though trade between the two territories was officially prohibited by Spanish law, it was recognizably difficult to enforce, and the House of Barr and Davenport was granted an exemption in order to provide economic and political stability in the region. Their trading activities thus fostered friendly relations between Nacogdoches and the native populations in the region.<sup>28</sup> The company's fortunes strongly mirror the town's during this period. Using the founders's ties to Louisiana, the House of Barr and Davenport channeled manufactured goods from New Orleans to Natchitoches and then on to Nacogdoches where they were purchased as supplies for Spanish troops and then transported further into Mexico. In Nacogdoches, Barr and Davenport purchased raw materials, including pelts and horses, and channeled them back to New Orleans. They also provided supplies such as flour, beef, salt, soap, to the Spaniards, and traded various items of interest, such as tobacco, lead, gunpowder, and various tools to the Indians.<sup>29</sup> The House of Barr operated in full swing until Barr's death in 1810 and Davenport's change of allegiance away from the Spanish in 1812.<sup>30</sup>

By 1800, Nacogdoches had grown to accommodate a population of 660, and was second in size only to San Antonio.<sup>31</sup> Because of its strategic location as the "gateway into Spanish Texas,"<sup>32</sup> both trade opportunities and military operations continued to draw new residents. Descriptions indicate that the core of the town plan, much as it exists today, was fully established by this date. The *plaza principal*, North Street (El Calle del Norte), Main Street (El Camino Real), Hospital Street, and Pilar Street (Pillar) were already in place. By 1801, the mission church outside of town had been abandoned in favor of a new parish church constructed on Main Street just east of the *plaza principal*, and a new church plaza accompanied it, facing present-day Church Street. Neither the church nor the plaza survives today; the church was seized by the Mexican military in 1827 and used as a barracks, then abandoned and demolished in 1835. Numerous homes were built along North Street as far as Mimms; businesses also occupied the areas around the *plaza principal* and extended east along Main Street to the secondary church plaza. The church cemetery was initially located on the northeast corner of North and Main Streets.<sup>33</sup>

As Napoleon re-acquired the Louisiana Territory from the Spanish in 1800 and sold this vast holding to the Americans in 1803, tensions along the Louisiana border – and between Nacogdoches and parts east – increased (FIG. 7). The Louisiana

<sup>27</sup> Ibarvo put under house arrest in San Antonio in December 1791, asked to relinquish his duties, and an investigation into his activities was launched. In the fall of 1796, the case was settled and it was determined that there was insufficient evidence to prove any charges against him. Ibarvo was set free, allowed to keep his rank of captain of the militia, but forbidden to return to live in Nacogdoches. See Partin 82-85.

<sup>28</sup> J. Villasana Haggard, "The House of Barr and Davenport," *SHQ* 49 (1945): 72-73.

<sup>29</sup> Partin 96.

<sup>30</sup> Partin 97.

<sup>31</sup> Partin, "History of Nacogdoches," 91. Source listed as "Moral to the Governor, 1 January 1800, translation, Blake Collection, Supplement, IV, 42."

<sup>32</sup> James McReynolds, "Spanish Nacogdoches" in McDonald, *Nacogdoches*, 22.

<sup>33</sup> Partin, "History of Nacogdoches," 91-92. Source for description: Blake Collection, XLV, 102-103. For church Partin 143-44, source Blake Collection LXIV, 79.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 22

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Purchase meant an influx of Americans to the region, adding yet a third interest group to complicate the tension between the Spanish and French contingents. Until the founding of the Republic of Texas in 1836, Nacogdoches was at the center of this political and military strife. With the establishment of the "Neutral Ground" between Spanish Mexico (or, Texas) and Louisiana in 1806, Nacogdoches's place as a point of political communication between the two territories was cemented.<sup>34</sup> This also meant that the town became an increasingly dangerous place to live, and that development between 1779 and 1810 was significantly arrested.

In 1812, the Gutiérrez-Magee Expedition, a coalition of Americans and Anglo-Spanish citizens based in Natchitoches, sought to take Texas from Spain on behalf of the United States. A single issue of the Spanish-language *Gaceta de Tejas*, the first newspaper written in Texas (produced in Nacogdoches but printed in Natchitoches), appeared on 25 May 1813 supporting the Expedition's goal of an independent Spanish-American state.<sup>35</sup> A volunteer army congregated in Nacogdoches under the leadership of Jose Gutierrez de Lara, who had participated in the failed Hidalgo uprising in Mexico in 1810, and Augustus Magee of Natchitoches. Many prominent Nacogdoches residents such as Peter Davenport participated in the revolt. The insurgent forces declared Texas free from Spain, and captured Nacogdoches, La Bahia and San Antonio before being defeated and pushed back to Louisiana in 1813.<sup>36</sup> Nacogdoches was abandoned as its citizens, who had supported the Expedition, fled Spanish ground and into Natchitoches. In June 1819, James Long (a plantation-owner from Natchez, Mississippi) led another expedition, again pushing through East Texas with the intent of taking the region for the United States. By October, Mexican authorities had repelled the invaders, sending them back to Louisiana.

As a result of this agitation for independence, the town of Nacogdoches suffered physically. The town was for the most part abandoned after the dismal failure of the Gutiérrez-Magee Expedition, and by 1820 when an American, W. F. Dewes, saw Nacogdoches it seemed "a desolate-looking place with a population of only about 100 persons."<sup>37</sup> In 1821, Stephen F. Austin described the town:

Nacogdoches is now the ruins of a (once) flourishing little village. The church and Seven Houses are still standing entire one of them two story high built of soft Rock—it was the seat of the Indian trade and a great deal of business was formerly done here.<sup>38</sup>

But Mexico's independence from Spain in 1821 changed Nacogdoches's fortunes. The town was recognized as a municipality of the Mexican Confederation, with jurisdiction over the territory bounded by the Neches and Sabine Rivers. Now serving as an administrative center of the new Mexican government (though controlled by the Department of Bexar in San Antonio), people began to re-settle Nacogdoches in small numbers. Nacogdoches again became the official point of contact between Mexican officials and native tribes of the region, including the Caddo, a growing number of Cherokee,

<sup>34</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v. "Neutral Ground," <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/NN/nbn2.html> (accessed August 9, 2006).

<sup>35</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v. "Gutiérrez-Magee Expedition," <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/GG/eeg1.html> (accessed June 16, 2006).

<sup>36</sup> For more on the expedition, see James McReynolds "Spanish Nacogdoches" in McDonald 23.

<sup>37</sup> Partin, "History of Nacogdoches," 118; source W. F. Dewes, 10 June 1820, transcript, Blake Collection, LXIV, 176-80.

<sup>38</sup> Stephen F. Austin, diary entry for 20 July in Eugene C. Barker, ed., "Journal of Stephen F. Austin on His First Trip to Texas, 1821" vol. 7, n. 4, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly Online*, [http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/publications/journals/shq/online/v007/n4/article\\_3.html](http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/publications/journals/shq/online/v007/n4/article_3.html) (Accessed Sun Jun 4 15:07:03 CDT 2006)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 23

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Kikapoo, Coushatta, Shawnee, and Comanche (who were increasingly compressed into the region by American occupation of the southeastern and central U.S.).<sup>39</sup>

The first Mexican *empresario* contracts for the lands surrounding Nacogdoches were granted in 1825 to Haden Edwards and Frost Thorn. Though the Mexican government barred the immigration of Anglos from the United States, the granting of *empresario* contracts to American-born Mexican citizens like Edwards and Thorn meant that that immigration began despite the restrictions. It was during this period that Nacogdoches gained the epithet "Gateway to Texas" in recognition of the town's role as a waystation for travelers moving from the U.S. to points further west.

Haden Edwards, an immigrant born in Virginia and raised in Kentucky, was designated *empresario* for Nacogdoches and was granted a large swath of land descending to the Gulf of Mexico. He arrived in September 1825 with a charge to settle the area with 800 families. He found much of the land was already claimed by what he had incorrectly perceived as squatters, many of whom were actually descendents of the original settlers but held no paper titles to the land they occupied. Although the *empresario* contract specified that all preexisting Spanish and Mexican land grants were to be honored, Edwards insisted that the letter of the law be upheld and all grants be substantiated else the land would be auctioned.<sup>40</sup> This created tensions between old settlers and Edwards's new settlers, who stood to benefit by the confiscation of unsubstantiated claims. Nacogdoches became fiercely divided into camps of old and new, sparking the Fredonian Rebellion of 1826-27. Embroiled in a series of administrative conflicts with the Mexican government involving elections and title issues, Edwards finally revolted. Supported by a group of settlers he had brought to Nacogdoches, Edwards declared "Fredonia" an independent state on 21 December 1826. Following a series of armed conflicts, in which the Old Stone House served as a fort for the Fredonian rebels, the Mexican government put down the insurgency, forcing Edwards and the others to flee to Natchitoches in January 1827.<sup>41</sup> Among the more famous of the rebels was Adolphus Sterne, who had immigrated to Nacogdoches in 1826. Although he supported the Fredonian rebellion and was convicted of treason by the Mexican government, he was quickly pardoned on the condition that he renew his allegiance to Mexico. This fate was likely shared by many who had participated, though Edwards was not treated with such leniency.

Immediately following the Fredonia Rebellion, Edwards's *empresario* grant was cancelled and his lands reassigned to David G. Burnet (300 families, December 1826), Joseph Vehlein (300 families, December 1826), and Lorenzo de Zavala (500 families, March 1829). None of these *empresarios* were able to invest the time or financial resources to meet their obligations, and in October 1830 consolidated their holdings under the company name of the Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company. Though the town of Nacogdoches was within the territory controlled by the company, most of the approximately 1,000 families had, by November 1835, settled along the Trinity River closer to the Gulf of Mexico.<sup>42</sup>

Frost Thorn's land grant, to the north and west of Nacogdoches, was equally inactive. By 1833, nearly a decade after the issuance of his grant, he had yet to bring any settlers to his land. Despite the fact that he failed to meet the requirements of his *empresario* contract, he chose to settle in Nacogdoches permanently and became a major political and economic

<sup>39</sup> See Manuel y Teran's diaries for his accounts of the Indians of the region in the late 1820s.

<sup>40</sup> "The Fredonia Rebellion" in McDonald 34.

<sup>41</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v. "FREDONIAN REBELLION," <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/FF/jcf1.html> (accessed January 24, 2006).

<sup>42</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v. "Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company," <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/GG/ufg1.html> (accessed June 16, 2006).



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 24

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

supporter of the community. Popularly believed to be Texas's first millionaire, Thorn's business savvy and dedication to the region eventually brought prosperity to the town.<sup>43</sup>

Despite early political instabilities, by the late 1820s, the settlement of Nacogdoches became permanent. Within Nacogdoches, the long-neglected civic infrastructure began to receive attention. In 1825, the *ayuntamiento*, or town council, began to hold regular meetings.<sup>44</sup> This council was an elected group consisting of three to five members, including a secretary, *regadores* or councilmen, and a legal advisor. All members were elected to support the head of the *ayuntamiento*, the *alcalde*.<sup>45</sup> This chief administrator was responsible for both judicial and administrative affairs, and served as the primary link between the Mexican governor and the local officials. According to election records from between 1821 and 1835, Nacogdoches had tremendous governmental instability, with 19 *alcaldes* in 14 years, and an average voter turn-out of 80 to 90%.<sup>46</sup>

Despite the apparent political volatility, the *ayuntamiento* encouraged order and civic development in Nacogdoches during these years. Not only did they pass laws to create a "civil" environment, such as prohibiting firearms, drunkenness, gambling, and giving or selling alcohol to Indians,<sup>47</sup> the local government encouraged property owners to fence their holdings, maintain well-groomed lots and public street fronts (both in terms of the lot and the public access), to cover wells and to pen livestock.<sup>48</sup> Progress was apparently slow: in 1833, the streets were in ill-repair and "Royal Street between the small square (probably the Church Plaza) and the creek needed repairing because 'there was formed in the middle of said street by the much waters a canal that prevented carts and wagons (From) being able to pass.'"<sup>49</sup>

The greatest potential for change to the physical structure of the town occurred during the Mexican period. In 1827, the council proposed changes to the plan of the *plaza principal* that would bring it in line with the regulations promulgated by the colonization laws of the Mexican state. These read as follows:

Art. 12. After selecting the site destined for the new town, he shall take care that the base lines run north and south, east and west, and he will designate a public square one hundred and twenty *varas* on each side, exclusive of the streets, which shall be called the principal or constitutional square, and this shall be the central point from which the street shall run, for the formation of squares and blocks in conforming with the model hereto annexed.

Art. 13. The block situated on the east side of the principal square, shall be destined for the church, curate's house, and other ecclesiastical buildings. The block on the west side of said square shall be designated for public buildings of the municipality. In some other suitable situation a block should be designated for a market square, another for a jail, and a house of correction, another for a school, and

<sup>43</sup> Partin, 124. *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v. "Thorn, Frost" <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/TT/fth32.html> (accessed June 21, 2006). Lucy May, "The Life and Activities of Frost Thorn" (M.A. thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1939).

<sup>44</sup> Partin, 121.

<sup>45</sup> "Mexican Nacogdoches" in McDonald 27.

<sup>46</sup> "Mexican Nacogdoches" in McDonald 27. From J. Singletary, *Local Government in Nacogdoches*, 113, Special Collections, Steen Library.

<sup>47</sup> "Mexican Nacogdoches" in McDonald 27.

<sup>48</sup> Partin, 148. Ayuntamiento minutes 1828-1832, trans. R. B. Blake, Blake Collection XXII, 114-15, 135, 147-48, 150-51, 168-69.

<sup>49</sup> Partin, "History of Nacogdoches," 171, source: Minutes of the Nacogdoches Ayuntamiento, 25 May 1833, translation, Blake Collection, XXII, 193-34.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 25

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

other edifices for public instruction, and another beyond the limits of the town for a burial ground.  
Art. 14. He shall on his responsibility cause the streets to be laid off straight, and that they are twenty *varas* wide, to promote the health of the town.<sup>50</sup>

The Nacogdoches *ayuntamiento* accordingly proposed the following changes: the *plaza principal* would be made square and its name changed to the Plaza of the Constitution; the streets surrounding the square would be straightened and re-aligned toward the cardinal directions; additionally, the streets would be widened to conform to the twenty *vara* width prescribed in the regulations; and finally, the old church plaza would be converted to a site for a new town hall, jail, and school.<sup>51</sup> However, the spirit of independence that ruled Nacogdoches prevented these recommendations from being fully implemented. Because the straightening and widening of streets imposed on existing lots, curtailed street access, and rendered many properties inaccessible, citizens rose up against the plan and supported the retention of the irregular central plaza and trapezoidal city lots.<sup>52</sup> The dog-leg streets still remain as evidence today.

Efforts to improve the town, however, did not abate. In 1835, George Pollitt created the town's first public well and a committee began the process of building an official public market.<sup>53</sup> Entertainment venues were also created, including those for dancing, horse racing, cock fights, and playing cards or billiards.<sup>54</sup>

Further improvements came in the form educational facilities. In 1825, citizens began to make the first attempts to found a local school. A teacher's contract has survived, and reports indicate that English-speaking children in Nacogdoches were able to receive private instruction by 1828.<sup>55</sup> In the absence of education funding from the Mexican government, local citizens formed the "Board of Piety" in 1831. Members included Colonel Piedras, Frost Thorn and Adolphus Sterne. This group, with its many Mexican contributors, successfully built a school for all children, both Spanish- and English-speaking. The school opened in 1831 with 51 students;<sup>56</sup> in March 1832, twenty-four were enrolled; in 1834, it accommodated eleven children.<sup>57</sup> Don José Cariere was the school's teacher during this early period. The list of contributions to the building campaign indicates the relative wealth of many of the town's leading citizens, as well as the kind of economy that existed in Nacogdoches at the time:

José de las Piedras	100 pesos
Peter Ellis Bean	all of the lumber necessary
Adolphus Sterne	25 pesos and 100 pounds of nails
Patricio Torres	month's service of hired laborer
Juan Mora	10 pesos
Francisco Guerrero	all of the hinges of the windows and doors
Manuel Santos	10 pesos

<sup>50</sup> Instructions to Commissioners, 1827. Translated by ??? <http://www.tamu.edu/ccbn/dewitt/cololaws.htm> CHECK THIS SOURCE.

<sup>51</sup> Partin, 145-46; Jose Antonio Saucedo to Alcalde of Nacogdoches, 23 August 1827, trans. R. B. Blake, Blake Collection, LXVII, 1-2.

<sup>52</sup> Partin 146, Ramón Musquiz to ayuntamiento of Nacogdoches, 5 February 1828, trans. R. B. Blake, Blake Collection, LXVII, 3.

<sup>53</sup> Partin, "History of Nacogdoches," 173. 24 January 1835, Ayuntamiento, Blake Collection, XXII, 219-20.

<sup>54</sup> McDonald 31.

<sup>55</sup> Partin, 142. Mier y Teran, p. \*\*\*.

<sup>56</sup> Vera Blackburn, "The Development of Education in Nacogoches County," (MA thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1950), 25.

<sup>57</sup> Partin, 143.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection 8 Page 26Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Jesus Santos	5 pesos
Ynes Santaleon	barrel of beans
Martin Ybarbo	2-year old steer, barrel of corn
Andres Gonzalez	personal service with yoke of oxen for 8 days
Juan Lazarin	personal service with yoke of oxen for 8 days
Concepcion Ybarbo	yearling calf
Antonio Mahchaca	10 pesos
Bautista Chirino	3-year old steer
Brigido Sineda	service of hired laborer for 8 days <sup>58</sup>

Though this fundraising campaign enabled the construction of a school building, it could not fund a new church as the Board of Piety had hoped. Religious services in Nacogdoches, when held at all, took place in various private homes until 1847. At this time, the wood-frame Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart was erected on present-day Pecan Street, between Main and Hospital Streets (potentially replaced by Property #87). This building was moved to Fern Lake in 1937, and in 1951 was relocated northeast of Nacogdoches to Center, where it remains today. The building was purchased by Nacogdoches's present-day Sacred Heart Catholic Church in 2001 with the intent to restore it.<sup>59</sup>

In 1828, Manuel de Mier y Terán was sent to report reporting on the condition of the outlying territories of the state of Coahuila y Tejas. While staying in Nacogdoches, he claimed the town's population had reached 700, accounting for the soldiers stationed at Piedras' garrison, and 100 women. He wrote that the "houses of the town were of lumber, well-built and facing the street. This town is located on a low hill surrounded by forest on all sides. Less than a mile away to the east and west run two arroyos with very good water. The first is called La Nana, and on its bank is the little stream called Father Marfil (Margil), with lovely water."<sup>60</sup> Despite Mier y Terán's optimistic description, an author named Pavie wrote in 1830, describing Nacogdoches as a "miserable outpost" with "the forty buildings which make up this village are in large part stores where English is spoken; the rest are more or less dirty huts with no other floor than the ground, on which the Spaniards stretch out skins and multicolored rugs which also serve them as coats. As for the Mexicans, they do nothing, absolutely nothing but warm themselves in the evening around the fire..."<sup>61</sup>

Despite the varied observations of the character of the town, Nacogdoches had clearly expanded from the days of Ibarvo's settlement. Improvements were made possible by the solidification of its trading economy, the beginnings of an agricultural economy, and the growth of an educated population interested in investing their own capital in a permanent settlement for their families. For example, in 1828, extensive trading resulted in the exportation of more than 40,000 deer skins, 1,500 bearskins, and so much otter and beaver that it had "almost been eradicated along the Neches, Angelina, and Trinity Rivers."<sup>62</sup> Still, the economic backbone of Nacogdoches in the 1830s consisted primarily of dry goods stores and services related to small-scale agricultural endeavors. Other businesses included lodging houses that provided primitive

<sup>58</sup> Chart from Blackburn, "The Development of Education in Nacogoches County," 24; source cited: document, Nacogdoches, 18 January 1831, Bexar Archives.

<sup>59</sup> <<http://sacredheartnac.org/history.html>> viewed 21 June 2006.

<sup>60</sup> Quote from Mier y Teran, 75. Partin, "History of Nacogdoches," 147.

<sup>61</sup> Pavie, 1830. page 194.

<sup>62</sup> Manuel de Mier y Teran, *Texas by Terán: The Diary Kept By General Manuel De Mier Y Terán On His 1828 Inspection of Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000), 75.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 27

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

quarters to traders and travelers.<sup>63</sup> Tax records show that in 1834, eighteen businesses paid \$191 in taxation, up from ten paying \$170 in 1832.<sup>64</sup> Another report documented seven retail stores in town, all owned by “foreigners,” meaning Americans. Both Mier y Terán and local Mexican officials noted that the Mexican-born population of Nacogdoches often lacked the capital to compete with the English-speaking North Americans.<sup>65</sup> None of the wooden structures that housed businesses during this period have survived.

In accordance with a diversifying economy, a nascent lumber industry began to emerge in Nacogdoches during the 1820s. Though the town’s geographical isolation, poor roads and a general lack of efficient transportation kept the production of lumber to a local affair, by 1820 Peter Ellis Bean, a significant figure in the political life of Nacogdoches, had reportedly established a lumberyard as well as a sawmill and gristmill powered by water.<sup>66</sup> Bean’s lumberyard was located along Banita Creek, “on the east side of the main plaza, just south of the present Stone Fort Bank.”<sup>67</sup> The lumber milled in this small-scale operation was certainly used locally to increase the speed and ease with which new settlers could build the increasing number of frame houses and businesses in the region. No longer would they have to fell trees and manually split them – instead they could purchase a higher quality of building materials in their own town.<sup>68</sup> Despite the ease of acquiring these materials, the erection of frame buildings required a great deal more skill and effort than previous palisade or log construction techniques. Only the relatively affluent of Nacogdoches, such as Adolphus Sterne, could afford to erect a building made of milled lumber. His home, located at 211 S. Lanana Street (NR 1976) just outside the Commercial District is perhaps the earliest surviving building in Nacogdoches (ca. 1830), and remains an excellent example of the construction technology and building materials that were put into use in Nacogdoches during the Mexican period.

With the immigration of Americans from the cotton-farming regions of the U.S. came the emergence of a significant agricultural economy in the Nacogdoches region. By the late 1820s, numerous slaves were brought from the southeast and the first cotton crops were harvested. Slavery became a lasting point of contention between Americans and the Mexican government. The American settlers believed that to become an agricultural center that could rival neighboring Louisiana, slave labor was an absolute necessity despite the fact that it was illegal in Mexico. Eventually an exception to the law was made for the region of Tejas and both slavery and large-scale agriculture flourished.<sup>69</sup> Colonel Juan Almonte’s reports of 1834 gave some indication of the early state of agriculture in the region: the Department of Nacogdoches, with a population of 8,000 whites and 1,000 black slaves, exported about 2,000 bales of cotton in 1833, as well as 90,000 skins

<sup>63</sup> See Pavie’s 1830 report, published in *Texas by Terán*, P. \*\*\*.

<sup>64</sup> Partin, 153; tax rolls, Nacogdoches, 1830-34, trans. R. B. Blake, Blake Collection, XII, 5-10.

<sup>65</sup> Partin, 154; source *ayuntamiento* of Nacogdoches to the Political Chief, 24 April 1832, translation, Blake Collection, XII, 311-13.

<sup>66</sup> Robert S. Maxwell and Robert D. Baker, *Sawdust Empire: The Texas Lumber Industry, 1830-1940* (College Station, Tex.: Texas A&M University Press, 1983), 17.

<sup>67</sup> Lois Foster Blount, “The Old Red House at Nacogdoches: A Leaf from the Reverend George L. Crockett’s Sketchbook,” v. 49, n.4 Southwestern Historical Quarterly Online, [http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/publications/journals/shq/online/v049/n4/contrib\\_DIVL8677\\_print.html](http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/publications/journals/shq/online/v049/n4/contrib_DIVL8677_print.html) (Accessed Thu Mar 2 11:59:11 CST 2006). See also R. B. Blake “Site of the Old Red House,” *Daily Sentinel* 5 March 1936.

<sup>68</sup> Hamilton Easton, “The History of the Texas Lumbering Industry,” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 1947), 54-58 contains various accounts of the use of lumber to build ante-bellum cabins and houses.

<sup>69</sup> Mier y Terán, *Texas by Terán*, 99: “Prosperous North Americans in Louisiana and other western states wish to acquire lands in Tejas for large-scale speculation, but they are restricted by the laws prohibiting slavery. If these laws were rescinded (may God forbid), in just a few years Tejas would be a powerful state that would rival Louisiana in production and wealth.”

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 28

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

and 5,000 head of cattle.<sup>70</sup> In general, larger cotton farms were picked by slaves; on small acreage, the farmers and their families did the harvesting. The first cotton gin was established in Nacogdoches in 1833,<sup>71</sup> but cotton was mainly exported raw to New Orleans where it was ginned, keeping the price for the product relatively low. An agricultural economy of this smaller scale meant that only a very few individuals made a substantial profit from the enterprise.

Nacogdoches became not only a “gateway” community, providing a way station to settlers and traders passing from the U.S. to Mexico, but a regional hub for trade, communication, and farming. As agriculture began to take root, Nacogdoches became one of the best regional sources for agricultural implements and stock, building supplies, and household goods. By 1832, the number of local businesses had increased, and included Sim's Tavern, Thorne's Store, and Robert's Store.<sup>72</sup> In addition, the region's postal service and entertainment centered in Nacogdoches.

Wealth was accumulated in Nacogdoches by those involved in numerous enterprises, with Frost Thorn, Adolphus Sterne, and William Goyens<sup>73</sup> being the prime examples. Each was involved in real estate speculation, trade, agriculture, and the burgeoning timber industry. Not only did they amass personal fortunes and exert tremendous influence within the community, but they re-invested some of their private capital into maintaining the civic infrastructure of Nacogdoches. Their support impacted not only the physical character of the town, but the cultural environment as well. For example, Adolphus Sterne, born in 1801 in Cologne, Germany, immigrated to New Orleans 1817 and became involved in law and trade throughout Louisiana. After moving to Nacogdoches in 1826, he maintained his trade contacts, bringing goods to and from New Orleans through Natchitoches. The Adolphus Sterne House, built in about 1830, is widely agreed to be the oldest surviving structure in Nacogdoches. A wooden frame structure clad in clapboards with a side-gabled roof and a deep gallery on the front, it is typical of the structures that would have been built in Nacogdoches during the period. Because of Sterne's status within the community, the home had finer detailing and interior appointments than most of the other wooden structures of the time. It clearly reflects the cross-cultural influences from French creole Louisiana that produced such deep-galleried, four-square plan buildings. As Jay Dearborn Edwards has shown, this basic typology, which is present throughout the American south and Atlantic seaboard, can be traced to the creole forms of the Caribbean and their interaction with European prototypes on the mainland of North America.

The “Red House,” the home of Colonel José de las Piedras (commander of the Mexican soldiers garrisoned in town), was typical of the Hispanic building tradition that existed in Nacogdoches during this period. In 1827, he petitioned the Mexican government to grant him and his soldiers town lots on which to build suitable homes. He received a lot on Pilar Street in the block west of the *plaza principal*, between present day Pecan and North Streets. Piedras purchased wood from Peter Ellis Bean's lumberyard in 1830 or 1831, erecting a wood-frame structure covered with adobe made from the

---

<sup>70</sup> Almonte's Statistical Notice in Kennedy's *Texas*, II, 71-77, as cited in Tarlton, “The History of the Cotton Industry,” 34. MORE DESCRIPTION in :Abigail Curlee, “History of a Texas Slave Plantation 1831-63\*”, Volume 26, Number 2, Southwestern Historical Quarterly Online, [http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/publications/journals/shq/online/v026/n2/contrib\\_DIVL1132.html](http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/publications/journals/shq/online/v026/n2/contrib_DIVL1132.html) (Accessed Thu May 11 10:32:38 CDT 2006)

<sup>71</sup> George W. Rice, “Agriculture,” in Nacogdoches Jaycees, *Bicentennial History of Nacogdoches* (Nacogdoches: Jaycees, 1976)

<sup>72</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v. “Nacogdoches, Battle of” <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/NN/genl.html> (accessed June 23, 2006).

<sup>73</sup> William Goyens (1794-1856) was a free black man who arrived in Nacogdoches in 1820 from North Carolina and established a series of successful businesses. He was a trusted negotiator with the Cherokee, but also had a blacksmith shop and manufactured wagons that he used to run a trade route between Nacogdoches and Natchitoches. He later opened a lumber and grist mill. Archie P. McDonald, “William Goyens,” All Things Historical series, Jan. 26, 2002. Viewed online <http://texasescapes.com>, March 3, 2006.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 29

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

red clay common in the region. Other officers under Piedras also petitioned for land and probably built similar houses.<sup>74</sup> Piedras's own residence was demolished sometime before 1912.

Despite the progress that diverse homes like Sterne's and Piedras's shows, Nacogdoches still had a complex social and political make-up that remained unresolved. Manuel Mier y Teran's assessment of the town aptly described the competing interests and factions that co-existed during these early years:

The population of the frontier is very heterogeneous. In numerical order of inhabitants, it consists of 25 tribes of savages who are situated around Nacogdoches, North Americans, and Mexicans. There are black slaves belonging to the second group, and four or five of these are the only capital brought by those who come from the north into Mexican territory. A great number of the foreigners who have entered the frontier are vicious and wild men with evil ways. Some of them are fugitive criminals from the neighboring republic; within our borders they create great disturbances and even (commit) criminal acts....The foreigners enjoy greater advantages than do the Mexicans. Commerce is in the hands of a few (of the former), but legal authority—in the form of an *ayuntamiento* and its *alcalde*—is in the hands of the latter. The greatest aversion prevails between them....<sup>75</sup>

Mier y Teran's observation of an "aversion" refers to competing factions within Nacogdoches, with one side loyal to the Mexican government, and the other continuing the push toward independence. The influx of Anglo settlers from the United States finally tipped the scales in favor of independence in the 1830s.

In an attempt to quell subversive influences, the governors of Mexico had in 1830 passed a law prohibiting immigration from the U.S. This brought to a head the tensions between loyalists and republicans, who began to organize throughout the East Texas region. In July of 1832, forces assembled just outside Nacogdoches; on August 2, under the leadership of James W. Bullock, they entered town and ousted Colonel Piedras and his soldiers, who were headquartered in the Stone House, the church, and the Red House. Instrumental in the Battle of Nacogdoches and its aftermath were James Bowie, who escorted the Mexican soldiers back to San Antonio, and Stephen F. Austin, who paroled Piedras at San Felipe and sent him back to Mexico. This battle and its victorious result pushed Mexican military forces out of Nacogdoches for the last time, making Nacogdoches the center of the early military and political activity that led to the creation of the Texas Republic in 1836.

With the removal of Mexican troops and the continued influx of Americans, Nacogdoches grew in large numbers during the mid-1830s. Colonel Juan Almonte, on an inspection tour of Texas in 1834, estimated the population of Nacogdoches to be 3,500,<sup>76</sup> an increase of from the 828 people counted in 1828 (100 of whom were slaves).<sup>77</sup> By 1835, the permanent population was reported to have been 996 with 140 reported slaves. Census data indicates that at this time, 37 masters

<sup>74</sup> Lois Foster Blount, "Old Red House at Nacogdoches", Volume 49, Number 4, Southwestern Historical Quarterly Online, [http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/publications/journals/shq/online/v049/n4/contrib\\_DIVL8677\\_print.html](http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/publications/journals/shq/online/v049/n4/contrib_DIVL8677_print.html) (Accessed Thu Mar 2 11:59:11 CST 2006). See also R. B. Blake "Site of the Old Red House," *Daily Sentinel* March 5 1936. For a sketch see *Nacogdoches Texas Centennial, 1716-1936* (Nacogdoches: Redland Herald, 1936), 13.

<sup>75</sup> Mier Y Teran, 79.

<sup>76</sup> J. E. Ericson, "Introduction" to Carolyn Reeves Ericson, *Nacogdoches – Gateway to Texas: A Biographical Directory, 1773-1849* (Ft. Worth, TX: Arrow/Curtis Printing Co., 1974), xxxii.

<sup>77</sup> "Mexican Nacogdoches," in McDonald 31.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 30

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

owned slaves, and the majority of these slaveholders were of Anglo descent. Only one, William Goyens, was a free black.<sup>78</sup> John Durst was the town's largest slaveholder, with 22 reported in 1835.<sup>79</sup> The influx of Anglo settlers – and with them African slaves -- had a profound effect on the character of Nacogdoches. Though the Anglo and Mexican citizens seemed to live, work and govern together with little conflict, a rising discontent with the Mexican government created a climate of political anxiety.

Between 1832 and 1836, many Americans who supported the cause of independence from Mexico began to assemble in Nacogdoches. Thus, the small town became a way point on the journey to fight in the coming revolution. Many of these would-be soldiers simply passed through, or came to enlist in volunteer companies that were forming and embarking from Nacogdoches – often stopping only long enough to gather arms and munitions that the Nacogdoches Committee of Vigilance and Safety had collected to outfit the resistance.<sup>80</sup> Other participants in the Revolution had a more permanent base in town. Sam Houston, for example, first came to Texas in 1832 and established his law practice in Nacogdoches in 1833 before becoming a hero in the Texas Revolution by defeating Santa Anna at the Battle of San Jacinto. Likewise, Thomas J. Rusk – who fought alongside Houston at San Jacinto and served as commander-in-chief of the Texas forces in 1836 – made his home in Nacogdoches by 1834.

## Texas Republic and American State: Community Development of Nacogdoches, 1836-1882

With the establishment of the Texas Republic in 1836, Nacogdoches experienced its first period of large-scale immigration, growing in its importance as a point of political authority. As the Republic of Texas was organized, the former Department of Nacogdoches was divided into several new Republican counties. In March 1836, at least seven counties split off, including the areas surrounding Liberty, Jefferson, Jasper, Sabine, San Augustine and Shelby; these were further subdivided at a later date. The remainder of land east of the Trinity River was allocated as Nacogdoches County (FIG. 8).<sup>81</sup> On 5 June 1837, the town of Nacogdoches was officially incorporated under the Republic of Texas. With this new decree, the city government reformed under the alderman-mayor system, to be governed by an elected council of eight aldermen, a mayor, treasurer, secretary, collector and constable.<sup>82</sup> In this same year, Nacogdoches held the first district court, presided over by Judge R.M. Williamson and held at the Stone House.<sup>83</sup>

Although the form of government and the cultural character of Nacogdoches had begun to change, the original plazas, laid out by Ibarvo, remained the physical focal point of the town. In expectation of further growth, town lots west of the central plaza were platted, and the county's first courthouse was erected on land south of the *plaza principal*. Although expansion remained slow, the downtown remained vital, and streets were lined with retail establishments such as general stores, printers, and tailors. Small manufacturing shops included a cabinet-maker, a door shop, and a crate and basket shop. New residential buildings were erected along Pilar, South Mound, Hospital and Church streets, all in close proximity to the dominant commercial district along Main Street (or, the former El Camino Real).

<sup>78</sup> "Mexican Nacogdoches," in McDonald 31.

<sup>79</sup> "Mexican Nacogdoches," in McDonald 31.

<sup>80</sup> For a detailed account of the activities of this Committee, see Partin 189.

<sup>81</sup> Partin 202.

<sup>82</sup> Partin 203.

<sup>83</sup> Partin 205.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 31

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Despite its prominence in the Republic's formation and its role as a county seat, Nacogdoches experienced very little population increase after the initial waves of immigration in the 1830s. Geographical isolation and poor roads contributed a great deal to the town's slow growth. Nevertheless, many citizens were relatively prosperous land-owners who were well-connected outside of the region. Still, those who lived in the county were generally poor slaves and sharecroppers who worked the land. Despite an overall stagnation, Nacogdoches was still perceived as a "prosperous" town.<sup>84</sup>

The relative success of Nacogdoches depended on the dedication of its private citizens, and the development of the town's civic infrastructure often relied on their personal financial investments. For despite its isolation, because of the role it had played in the Texas revolution, many prominent Texans had resided in, and continued to reside in Nacogdoches. Among these were Sam Houston, Frost Thorne, and Adolphus Sterne. Sam Houston lived in Nacogdoches shortly after the establishment of the Republic of Texas. Houston resided at the corner of Pilar and Pecan Streets between 1839 and 1840. Although the home was later demolished, it became the site of Liberty Hotel, and was eventually refurbished as Nacogdoches City Hall.<sup>85</sup> Frost Thorne, the state's first millionaire, lived in town until his death in 1854. He built his home on Main Street; after his death in 1854, the two-story wood-frame structure became the Hart Hotel. It was eventually demolished to make way for the Woodmen of the World building.<sup>86</sup> Adolphus Sterne remained until his death in 1852. Both the Sterne and Thorne families continued to be influential in Nacogdoches. Other prominent citizens to maintain homes in Nacogdoches included Haden Edwards (*empresario* and leader of the Fredonia Rebellion of 1825), and Thomas J. Rusk, who kept his home in town even as he was elected chief justice of the Republic's Supreme Court in 1838 and to the United States Senate, along with Sam Houston, in 1846.

Under the Republic, Nacogdoches clearly identified with American policies rather than Mexican, and the balance of power in the town clearly shifted toward immigrants from the north and east. Mexican loyalists, losing their support base, had departed the area. This meant that the practice of slavery, which had been problematic as part of the Mexican state, became largely acceptable. The Native American tribes that had populated the region were, under United States policy, regrouped elsewhere, and their use of Nacogdoches as a point of contact with authorities was discontinued. With both political and economic authority now centered in the hands of Anglo-American settlers, the diversity that had marked Nacogdoches early on thus diminished. In the 1830s, Nacogdoches began to emerge as predominantly "American" town, a status cemented by Texas's admission to statehood in 1845.

Agriculture, small scale commercial and manufacturing endeavors, and institutionalized education were among the dominant economic forces in Nacogdoches between 1836 and the 1880s. A lack of expedient transportation largely impacted the area's ability to diversify or develop at a rapid pace; growth was thus comparatively slow. To counter this obvious hindrance to economic prosperity, a number of local citizens began to invest private capital to improve the transportation infrastructure. Among these efforts was the clearing of the Angelina River, completed in 1844 by Robert S. Patton, with the financial backing of Adolphus Sterne, Thomas J. Rusk, and John Hyde, Sr. "Patton's Landing" was established as the primary transfer point between the river and the road connecting to Nacogdoches. This effort provided a faster outlet via steamboat to the Sabine Pass. Still, the river was subject to seasonal variations in flow and was not always

<sup>84</sup> Nacogdoches Chronicle 21 Dec 1852.

<sup>85</sup> *Nacogdoches Texas Centennial, 1716-1936* (Nacogdoches: Redland Herald, 1936), 21. Bill Murchison, *Nacogdoches: past and Present*, 83.

<sup>86</sup> *Nacogdoches Texas Centennial, 1716-1936* (Nacogdoches: Redland Herald, 1936), 21. sketch on p. 12.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 32

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

---

navigatable. Shipping did, however, remain an important means of transporting goods to and from Louisiana until the introduction of the railroad in 1883.

After Texas achieved independence, agriculture, with a newly sharpened focus on slave-based cotton production, continued a slow regional expansion.<sup>87</sup> Few records of cotton production survive for the period of the Republic, but production numbers beginning in 1850 indicate a steady growth. A small store and cotton storage sheds were built at Patton's Landing to accommodate the slight increase in agricultural trade.<sup>88</sup>

Education, an early concern of the citizens of Nacogdoches, became a major source of growth and prosperity for the small town. The earliest primary schools were funded privately. In the early 1840s there were at least two schools, one run by Mr. Moffitt and another by Benayah Thompson – the latter is where Adolphus Sterne sent his own children.<sup>89</sup> In 1855 a high school was established “at the building now occupied by Judge Ochiltree as an office” with the fees for basic lessons ranging from \$3.00 a month for spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, and grammar to \$7.00 per month for piano lessons.<sup>90</sup>

Perhaps the most significant educational development occurred in February 1845, when Nacogdoches University was granted status as the first non-sectarian college in the Republic of Texas. Its charter stated that “no religious, sectarian tenets or doctrines shall be inculcated in the course of instruction, and that the institution shall be equally open to the education of the children of persons of all classes, without regard to their religious belief.”<sup>91</sup> Hayden Edwards was reported to have donated eighteen acres of land for a campus north of the central plaza,<sup>92</sup> to which J.R. Arnold and Charles Taylor added three and a half acres. The 21 ½ acres were named Washington Square, in honor of George Washington. Classes met in the Red House until 1852, when the university adopted the Temperance Hall (located on current-day Hospital Street on the site of the present Methodist parsonage). In 1858, the Howard Brothers of Henderson designed the first building on Washington Square, a Greek Revival building which still stands today. Constructed of hand-made red bricks, the Old Nacogdoches University Building was completed in 1859 and is now part of the Washington Square Historic District (NR 1992). Classes met for a few years in this building, before school was interrupted by the outbreak of the Civil War. A shortage of income forced the University to close in 1861, after which the building served as a hospital and as a barrack for Confederate troops. It was later used as a part of Nacogdoches High School until the 1930s.

With the restoration of order under the Republic, citizens of Nacogdoches began to turn their attention to other civic development, including the establishment of fraternal organizations. Among the many efforts of the 1830s and the 1840s was the formation of the first Masonic Lodge in 1837. Many of the new settlers in Nacogdoches were Masons, and with the help of John Gillespie, established a charter for Milam Lodge No. 40.<sup>93</sup> Prominent members of the lodge included

---

<sup>87</sup> For a comparison of the cotton-based economies in 1844: Jefferson, Jasper, and Bowie Counties produced 6,000 bales; St. Augustine, Nacogdoches, Shelby, and Harrison Counties produced 8,000 bales each; Red River County produced 10,000 bales. *Telegraph and Texas Register*, 30 October 1844, cited in Dewitt Talmage Tarlton, “The History of the Cotton Industry in Texas, 1820-1850” (MA Thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1923), 45.

<sup>88</sup> Lois Foster Blount, “Steam Boats on the Angelina,” *Bicentennial Commemorative History*, 127-28.

<sup>89</sup> Blackburn, 32-34.

<sup>90</sup> *Nacogdoches Chronicle*, 3 April 1855, quoted in Blackburn, 39-40.

<sup>91</sup> Weems, “Gateway of a Gaining Nation,” 113-14.

<sup>92</sup> Jackson; Historic Resources of Nacogdoches, 3.

<sup>93</sup> McDonald, Archie. *By Early Candlelight; The Story of Old Milam*. Fort Worth: 1967, 25, 37. See also Partin 208.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 33

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Haden Edwards, John Roberts, Adolphus Sterne, Frost Thorn, Charles S. Taylor, and Thomas J. Rusk.<sup>94</sup> Other endeavors included the formation of a “lyceum” in 1853 to promote intellectual discussion and maintain a lending library.<sup>95</sup>

Under the Republic of Texas, Protestant congregations, which had been illegal during the Catholic-dominated Spanish and Mexican periods, made their presence more obviously known in Nacogdoches. Methodist camps were also established throughout the county. For many years, however, Nacogdoches had only two churches: the Sacred Heart Catholic Church built in 1847 and Christ Church Episcopal Church established 1848, with its church building erected in 1852. The timber for the church was “hand-hewn, and the lumber was sawed with ‘whip’ saws.” To support the building campaign, Frost Thorn donated the site on the east side of Church Street, just north of Main (on present-day Church Street), and Judge Clark offered \$500 in gold.<sup>96</sup> This church was abandoned in favor of a new building on Washington Square in 1888.

Despite the relative slow growth of the town during the Republic, its citizens maintained a healthy self-image. Interest in building the accoutrements of a prosperous town rose. For example, in 1847, the county’s wooden courthouse was moved to the center of the *plaza principal* to give it an air of importance. However, citizens objected to building in the center of the old plaza, and a new brick county courthouse, two stories with a gable front supported by columns, appeared in 1855 on the south side of the square (FIG. 9).<sup>97</sup>

With the death of its first generation of civic boosters in the 1850s – figures such as Thorn, Bean, Sterne, and Pollitt – and the onset of the Civil War in 1861, Nacogdoches slipped into a period of stagnation. The population declined to around 500 in 1870, and hovered at 300 into the 1880s. Little new construction commenced. Even the private attention to infrastructure that existed from the 1820s to the 1850s diminished as both manpower and capital were diverted to the war cause. Of all men eligible for military service in Nacogdoches County, only 90 remained un-enlisted in 1863.<sup>98</sup> Fields lay fallow, and lumbering came to a stand-still. Steamboat traffic on the Angelina stopped. The iron works foundry located in Nacogdoches turned its production to support the war effort, but its output was apparently negligible and it closed its doors before the war’s end.<sup>99</sup> The university ceased operation and its main building was used as a hospital for Confederate soldiers, only later to become the headquarters for federal troops during Reconstruction.

After the Civil War ended, economic recovery was extremely slow. The lack of prosperity was further exacerbated by inevitable social and racial tensions of the Reconstruction period. A branch of the Freedmen’s Bureau headquartered in Nacogdoches with the mission of smoothing the transition from slavery to freedom. The ex-slave narratives recorded by the Federal Writers Project of the Works Progress Administration in the late 1930s include three testimonials by African-Americans who had been enslaved in Nacogdoches County: Lizzie Hughes, who had been the property of Dr. Newton Fall in Chireno; Willis Easter, born into slavery in Nacogdoches; and Annie Row, who worked on the plantation of Charles Finneley near Rusk. Row’s recollections describe log cabins and a division of labor between men and women, with men working in the cotton fields and women spinning cotton into fabric. Many of these men and women left

<sup>94</sup> McDonald, Archie. *By Early Candlelight; The Story of Old Milam*. Fort Worth: 1967, 25, 37. See also Partin 208.

<sup>95</sup> Nacogdoches Chronicle, 23 August 1853, 14 March 1854.

<sup>96</sup> <http://www.christchurch-nacogdoches.org/history.htm>, viewed 23 June 2006.

<sup>97</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 121.

<sup>98</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 103-04.

<sup>99</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 105.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 34

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Nacogdoches County when freedom came, but others stayed as house servants, as workers in the lumber industry, as agricultural workers, and as sharecroppers.<sup>100</sup>

The transition to freedom was difficult, however, and there was a great deal of tension between former masters and the newly freed African-American population. The comments of landowner James Harper Starr, local physician and brother-in-law of Frost Thorn, illustrate a common point of view:

They (Freedmen) are congregating in the homes and shanties about the villages and towns doing nothing but begging and stealing, sunning themselves like alligators along the mud banks. They think freedom means freedom from labor, and are generally thus taught by the philanthropic and pious agents of the Freedmen's Bureau.<sup>101</sup>

But by 1867, farmers had begun to employ former slaves and pay them wages. The *Texas Almanac* wrote the Nacogdoches County farmers, despite their prejudice, employed blacks who "work tolerably well, without a Bureau; their behavior is very good, but their numbers are diminishing."<sup>102</sup>

Incidents of racially-motivated violence flared in Reconstruction-era Nacogdoches County. The events of the Linn Flat Raid of 1871 centered on conflict between local pro-Southern agitators and the members of the state police force created by Governor Davis to quell local incidents of violence against blacks and Union supporters. In Linn Flat, just northwest of Nacogdoches, white members of a Reconstruction police force backed by a group of armed African-Americans killed members of the local sheriff's department, leading to a well-publicized trial and much racial paranoia amongst the white citizens of Nacogdoches County.<sup>103</sup>

The Ku Klux Klan had formed a group in Nacogdoches by 1870, when a report by a Reconstruction officer indicated that Klansmen had attacked a group of African-Americans, "killing one, leaving another for dead, (with) several others missing."<sup>104</sup> Despite the passage of the Ku Klux Klan Act in 1871, the group did remain active in the area, though record of its activities is, as in most southern towns, hard to come by.

Against this backdrop of racial and political tension, Nacogdoches struggled to find an economic source to aid its recovery from the Civil War. Though Nacogdoches County was home to the first producing oil well in Texas – Lynn T. Barrett tapped the Oil Springs field about 15 miles southeast of town – the timing of this exploration was poor. Oil prices were low and Barrett's contract for production was cancelled before it even began. Though the field began producing ten years later, it never became an important economic contributor to the local economy.<sup>105</sup> In 1870s, a fledgling lumber industry again began to develop, but remained severely limited by expense and lack of efficient means of transportation.<sup>106</sup>

---

<sup>100</sup> *Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1938*. Texas Narratives, Volume XVI, Part 3, Annie Row, p. 258.

<sup>101</sup> Starr to \*\*\*, from Craven, *James Harper Starr*, quoted in Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 106.

<sup>102</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 106.

<sup>103</sup> See Gary Borders, *A Hanging in Nacogdoches: Murder, Race, Politics, and Polemics in Texas's Oldest Town, 1870-1916* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), \*\*\*.

<sup>104</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 106

<sup>105</sup> Daily Sentinel, 22 July 1959. See also Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 107.

<sup>106</sup> McDonald, *Nacogdoches*, 83.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 35

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

By 1880, Nacogdoches remained a small town of around 300 people, a population that it had maintained since at least 1860.<sup>107</sup> The economy relied upon the providing of goods and services to agricultural families and workers in the county. Agriculture remained the major industry in the area, with a focus on cotton and corn. Still, compared to other counties within the Texas cotton belt, Nacogdoches produced a relatively small crop. The 54 cotton gins operating in 1880 produced only 6,000 bales.<sup>108</sup>

In 1880, the commercial district consisted of a short row of one-story frame buildings along Main Street (FIG. 10). According to Burke's 1881 *Texas Almanac* the town had "nine general stores, one grocery, one drug store," daily mail and one weekly newspaper, the *Nacogdoches News*.<sup>109</sup> In his county history of 1880, Nugent E. Brown wrote:

The town, as in now exists, is by no means equal to what it has been in the past, either as to population, wealth, or importance.... in course of time came railroads, steamboats and ships, that all passed around and beyond Nacogdoches, and stripped her of her strength by taking away these advantages, and she now stands upon the same footing with ordinary county sites, save in point of history, a somewhat sad relic of past glory.<sup>110</sup>

## **"Poor Man's Paradise:" Community Development of Nacogdoches, 1883-1919**

The arrival of the Houston, East and West Texas Railroad in Nacogdoches in 1883 finally generated a much-needed economic impetus. Having missed the first wave of railroad development in Texas during the 1850s, the citizens of post-Reconstruction Nacogdoches were determined to bring tracks to town. The great inhibitor to the expansion of Nacogdoches had always been its poor accessibility. Though it had been an anchor point on the Camino Real, by the late nineteenth century the old trails were all but abandoned. As trade began to shift away from the interior and toward the coast, Galveston and Houston replaced San Antonio as the dominant transportation centers. With this shift, the older routes to and from Mexico – which passed through Nacogdoches – became less prominent, and many portions became impassable in poor weather, often turning into a sea of mud.<sup>111</sup> Even in good weather, "the road had deteriorated into a series of holes, ruts, and ridges through which wagons and coaches lurched and groaned."<sup>112</sup> Travelers allotted two days just to reach nearby San Augustine, only 35 miles from Nacogdoches. The railroad was essential not only for expedient travel, but to provide a means by which the town could begin to engage in more than just a local economy.

Paul Bremond, a businessman from Houston (and the former president of the Houston and Texas Central Railroad), was the force behind the Houston, East & West Texas Railroad (HE&WT). This narrow-gauge line was meant to connect the small communities of East Texas with Houston to the southwest and to Shreveport in the east, primarily to expand the potentially rich cotton and lumber industries of East Texas. With an approved charter from the State Legislature (granted

<sup>107</sup> Census figures, quoted in Robert S. Maxwell, "Nacogdoches and the Railroads," Nacogdoches Jaycees, *Bicentennial History*, 133.

<sup>108</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 108.

<sup>109</sup> Burke's *Texas Almanac* (Houston: W. H. Coyle, 1881), 67. Partin lists, "ten general mercantile establishments, one drug store, two saloons, two family groceries, a restaurant, two blacksmith shops...a jeweler's shop, a shoemaker, a saddle and harness maker, three hotels, a livery stable, and several woodwork shops...several land agents and surveyors...(and) nine or ten attorneys, and four doctors." Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 108-09.

<sup>110</sup> Nugent E. Brown, *The History of Nacogdoches County, Texas* (1880), 57.

<sup>111</sup> Stephen L. Hardin, "People and Events Along the Old San Antonio Road and Los Caminos Reales," in *A Texas Legacy: The Old San Antonio Road & the Caminos Reales, A Tricentennial history, 1691-1991*, p. 20:5

<sup>112</sup> Maxwell, *Whistle in the Piney Woods*, 23, source cited as Burke's *Texas Almanac* (1881): 67

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 36

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

in 1875), Bremond began construction of the line in 1875 and 1876. The project was financed in large part by Bremond and community leaders near Houston who were convinced to contribute funds and land to the HE&WT in order to avoid a devastating rail by-pass. Bremond also enlisted investors from his native New York and borrowed huge sums from bankers, but the finances of the project remained so tenuous that building the entire line took nearly ten years.

Thus, the efforts and contributions of private citizens, rather than any made by county or city administrations, led to the construction of the railroad to Nacogdoches. Along with Bremond's funding, local citizens donated land and rights-of-way, and pressured non-complying neighbors to do the same.<sup>113</sup> The path of the railroad was laid out in the low grounds to the west of Banita Creek, nearly a half mile from the *plaza principal*. It was typical for landowners to contribute town lots, with no compensation. One such citizen gave land asking for nothing other than a guarantee that the railroad would reach Nacogdoches before 1 November 1883. Yet another contribution of land was made for the depot, with the requirement that one hotel and one saloon be built on the parcel; other contributions were made specifically for the warehouses to be built adjacent the depot. Several donations were made in exchange for an annual railroad pass.<sup>114</sup>

The line reached Livingston by 1879 and Lufkin in 1882. In May 1883, the first rail service arrived in Nacogdoches, connecting the town over the 140 mile journey to Houston. What was once a week-long journey now took one day: the express train left Houston at 9:40am and arrived in Nacogdoches at 7:10 pm; the outbound train departed at 8:00 am and arrived in Houston at 5:30 pm.<sup>115</sup> In January 1886, the line was completed northwards to Shreveport. Though the railroad was heralded with great fanfare, dissatisfaction came quickly. It was a narrow gauge rail (3'), and the majority of lines in Texas were standard gauge (4'8").<sup>116</sup> Bremond had lobbied for this, as he hoped that the narrow bed would be less expensive to build and operate. In reality, it meant that upon reaching Houston or Shreveport, the train cars had to be unloaded and re-loaded onto standard gauge cars. The rough travel experience often caused cars to jump from their tracks. After suffering nearly ten years of inconvenience, in 1894, the rails were finally converted from narrow gauge to standard.<sup>117</sup>

Despite some dissatisfaction, the HE&WT did encourage the construction of subsequent railroads through the county. The second railroad to reach Nacogdoches was affiliated with the Southern Pacific, and operated under the name of the Texas and New Orleans Railroad (T & NO). Built between 1882 and 1903, this line ran from Beaumont to Dallas, and intersected with the HE&WT in Nacogdoches. The Nacogdoches and Southeastern Railroad was completed in 1905 and ran southeast from Nacogdoches to Calgary where it shared a junction with the Santa Fe Railroad. This line was in part constructed to transport lumber to EB Hayward's mill, and was later extended by the Frost Lumber company.

In Nacogdoches, the rail line was built on a north-south trajectory on the far west side of the commercial district, parallel to North Street and roughly perpendicular to Main Street. In 1880, the first wood-frame depot was built to accommodate passenger service on the line. The original depot survived until 1910 when it was destroyed by fire caused by a lightning strike (FIG. 11). Giles Haltom, editor of both the *Daily* and *Weekly Sentinel*, later recalled this first depot:

<sup>113</sup> For example, a group of citizens formed a fund with which to purchase right-of-way from a land owner who refused to participate in the effort. Robert S. Maxwell, *Whistle in the Piney Woods: Paul Bremond and the Houston, East and West Texas Railway* (Texas Gulf Coast Historical Association, 1963), 19-20, 20 quoted.

<sup>114</sup> Maxwell, "Nacogdoches and the Railroads," *Bicentennial Commemorative History of Nacogdoches*, 134.

<sup>115</sup> Maxwell, *Whistle in the Piney Woods*, 25, see *Houston Post*, May 25, 1883.

<sup>116</sup> Handbook of Texas, "Paul Bremond."

<sup>117</sup> Maxwell, "Nacogdoches and the Railroads," 136.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 37

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

The passenger depot was a small brown building – two stories high where the office was located and one story in height in the extension that was used as the freight depot, and loading and loading facilities. Charlie Stinson was agent. He was a bachelor and slept upstairs. Jeff Harris was the colored porter. He and Stinson handled all the freight...<sup>118</sup>

To the north and south of the depot, wood-frame warehouses were built to accommodate goods and to provide packing spaces for shipping. This area was soon home to numerous cotton yards, sheds, and platforms, including the large yard operated by I.V. Sturdevant from 1896.<sup>119</sup> (FIG. 12)

The railroad brought a small boom to Nacogdoches in the 1880s. The town saw a small, if brief, influx of new people and new businesses. By 1890, the city had tripled in size, from 333 in 1880 to 1,138. Cotton production in the county likewise tripled between 1880 and 1900, with more than 16,000 bales harvested per year. Though this continued to be small in comparison to the major cotton-producing counties in southeastern Texas, yet it was a noticeable gain over pre-railroad cotton production. By 1904, Nacogdoches County was home to over seventy gins, and a large cotton seed oil mill was set up in town.<sup>120</sup> Timber production continued to increase slowly as the railroad made it possible both to log more quickly and to transport lumber for sale in Houston, Shreveport, and Dallas. Small manufacturing plants also took root, including a cabinet shop, door factory, and basket factory.<sup>121</sup>

Though occupied since the eighteenth century, it wasn't until the late 1880s that the commercial district of Nacogdoches finally began to take on the built character that it retains today. As the first Sanborn fire insurance map of Nacogdoches (1885) indicates (FIG. 13), the location of the train depot at the western edge of town began to give the commercial district some discernible shape. The greatest concentration of commercial properties remained around the public square and the two flanking blocks of Main Street. The public square, still open and containing only a well, was the core of town, with the court house and jail anchoring the southwest corner (near the present-day city hall). Sanborn maps indicate that within this core, in 1885, there were at least 13 general merchandise stores, three grocers, two meat markets, two druggists, one furnishings shop, two printing offices, five warehouses, one school building (located just north of the square along Fredonia Street), and three churches. Services included two barbers, five professional offices, one cobbler, one tailor and one jeweler. Entertainment could be had at the Saloon and Billiards on the north side of the public square, or at the small restaurant tucked just behind the saloon, on Elm Street (later Pecan). EM Brown's Livery at the corner of Main and Church was the only one mapped at the time, and neighbored one of Nacogdoches three hotels (the Mitchell to the west Church and Main, the Hart Hotel on the east side of Main and Church, and the Goff at Piller (Pilar) and North Streets). Typical of general merchandise and dry goods stores to open in the 1880s were Mayer & Schmidt and Cason, Monk, & Co. John Schmidt and Abraham Mayer left Germany for the United States in 1875, arriving in Henderson, Texas in 1878. These two formed a business partnership, and opened Mayer & Schmidt department store on Main Street. In 1880, with news of the railroad's arrival in Nacogdoches being imminent, they opened a branch in Nacogdoches that operated until the stock market crash in 1929.<sup>122</sup> In 1895, Loughery described Mayer & Schmidt store as the "Hercules of

<sup>118</sup> Giles Haltom, "In Nacogdoches 40 Years," *Weekly Sentinel*, 31 October 1929, p. 4.

<sup>119</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1896.

<sup>120</sup> McDonald, *Nacogdoches*, 85.

<sup>121</sup> McDonald, *Nacogdoches*, 83.

<sup>122</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 118.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 38

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

---

Nacogdoches' business houses." Dealing primarily in dry goods, the store carried "\$50,000 stock, and yearly sales of \$100,000....They employ ten salesmen and keep a buyer constantly in New York."<sup>123</sup>

The character of retail establishments soon began to change both economically and architecturally. The railroad made it possible to stock a wider variety of goods and the larger volume of business allowed owners to build more expensive and permanent structures. The material of choice for commercial establishments quickly shifted from wood to the more fire-resistant brick, enabling permanent and more aesthetically ambitious buildings. By 1885, eight brick buildings had been constructed around the public square, five of these along Main Street. The *Pen Picture*, for example, noted that: "The business section of the city is, for the most part, built up with handsome brick blocks of modern design, and all businesses practiced in modern towns, are represented here and there..."<sup>124</sup> Demand for bricks prompted the establishment of a local brick-making enterprise. The Brick House at 522 Virginia Avenue (outside of the Downtown Historic District) has long been thought to be the oldest surviving brick structure in town, built in 1886 by local brick maker Henry L. Austin as a residence for himself. Another local brick manufacturer, Lit Herring, was thought to provide the bricks for Dietrich Rulfs's Christ Church on Washington Square.

In anticipation of the building boom to come, in 1880 local businessman John Schmidt invited German-born architect and builder Dietrich Rulfs (1848-1926) to come to Nacogdoches (FIG. 14). Rulfs arrived in New Orleans, in 1879 or 1880, from Oldenburg, Germany, and made his way (with his family) to Nacogdoches. He was skilled in the design and construction of brick buildings, and perhaps more than any other builder or architect, significantly affected the architectural character and ambitions of Nacogdoches. Rulfs designed and built Schmidt's house (now demolished) and went on to construct many of the major commercial edifices downtown, churches, and several large homes for prominent citizens. Among his most important commissions in the downtown area are the Opera House (1888-89), the Liberty Hotel (1891), the Cotton Exchange Building (1895), the Commercial Bank Building (1903), the Mahdeen Building (1918), and the Jones House (1897).

The Opera House, commissioned in 1888-89 by John Schmidt was one of Rulfs most notable architectural achievements that also affected the cultural life of the small town (FIG. 15). It was built at the corner of Main and Church Streets (Property #40), on the site of the former Mitchell Hotel. The theater space was on the second floor, with a ticket booth, general store, and confectionary on the first. Though small, Nacogdoches hosted theatre companies passing through the region on the two railroads that now passed through town that did put on one-night performances.<sup>125</sup> Hypnotists, minstrels, escape artists, plays, musicals, and vaudeville acts performed well into the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

By 1891, six years after the Sanborn Company could document only eight permanent brick buildings in town, Nacogdoches had grown in every direction. At least 35 new brick buildings appear on the Sanborn Map of 1891, illustrating both the trend toward permanent construction and the commercial expansion along Main Street (approximately to Mound Street). The density along Main Street between Mound and North increased to match what had previously been limited to that around the public square. Typical of the establishments that opened in this period were hotels, dry goods stores, and even entertainment venues. D. K. Cason moved to Nacogdoches in 1893 and opened a hardware, furniture, and

---

<sup>123</sup> Loughery, *Pen Picture of the City of Nacogdoches*, 33.

<sup>124</sup> Loughery, *Pen Picture*, 5.

<sup>125</sup> H. Lawrence Zillmer, "Theatre in Nacogdoches," *Commemorative History of Nacogdoches*, 107.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 39

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

undertaking business at the corner of Pecan and East Main Streets. In 1906 he formed Cason, Monk & Company by forming a partnership with R. C. Monk, a former manager for Mayer & Schmidt. Cason Monk focused on hardware and undertaking and moved into a building at 317 East Main Street where it remains today.<sup>126</sup>

To accommodate increasing travel through the area, the Bullens Hotel opened on Church Street, and the Baxter Hotel opened on West Main Street near the train depot around 1890. It advertised forty rooms and was the largest of several hotels that opened on the west side, including the Banita Hotel at 201 W. Pillar (1896), a large two-story wooden-frame structure called “the choice of traveling salesmen,” (burned 1926) and the Wilson Hotel, “a favorite boarding house for local residents.”<sup>127</sup> (FIG. 16)

One of the more significant developments in Nacogdoches’s commercial history was the formation of several large banks. Soon after the arrival of the railroad in 1883, retail trade began to expand and the need for institutionalized banking became evident. The foundation of financial institutions made it possible to do business locally, without traveling to Houston. The first bank in Nacogdoches was privately owned.<sup>128</sup> Operated as A. Wettermark and Son, this banking house was established in 1883 and operated until 1903 when its proprietor, Colonel Benjamin S. Wettermark, fled Nacogdoches after allegedly embezzling \$500,000. He was never caught, yet the immediate closure of this bank and the loss of funds dampened the immediate economic progress in Nacogdoches. The first public bank was established in 1890, but soon closed. Between 1890 and 1899, the First National Bank (the first nationally chartered bank operated in Nacogdoches) provided much-needed loans and financial services. It was replaced by the Commercial National Bank (1901) and the Stone Fort National Bank (1903), both of which still operate. In 1901, the Commercial National Bank opened at the corner of East Main and Church Streets, in a brick building designed by Dietrich Rulfs. The bank was led by a diverse group of investors, including T. J. Williams of Beaumont, Pete and H. H. Youree of Shreveport, W. B. Chew and James A. Baker of Houston, and R. S. Lovett, president of the Southern Pacific Railroad.<sup>129</sup> In 1902, E.A. Blount purchased the controlling interest. In 1910, the Commercial National Bank re-organized under the State Guaranty System (precursor of the Federal Deposit Insurance Company, 1933), changing its name to Commercial Guaranty State Bank. With F. Hal Tucker as cashier, Blount ran the bank until his death in 1914. He was succeeded as president of the bank by his son, Eugene H. Blount.<sup>130</sup> Later bank presidents included Thomas E. Baker (1928-1945) and Thomas W. Baker (1945). In a continued effort to counter the deleterious effects of the Wettermark scandal, the Stone Fort National Bank opened in 1902. While the Commercial National Bank was originally owned by a group of outside investors, the Stone Fort Bank was organized and ran by local businessmen. Captin I. Link Sturdevant, Charles Hoya, William U. Perkins, and J. J. Hayter were early leaders. Later bank presidents included William B. Mast and E. W. Monk.<sup>131</sup>

Due in part to its rail linkage to Houston, Nacogdoches assumed a leading role as the agricultural center of the county. Rich soils and an agreeable climate proved conducive to production of cotton, though the town saw little in the way of related industries. The majority of cotton-related industry was linked to packaging (compression of bales), storage and re-distribution. By 1896, several cotton yards and platforms had opened along the railroad tracks between Main and Pilar Streets, the largest of which was Sturdevant’s (which became part of PM Sander’s yard in 1900). The Nacogdoches

<sup>126</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 118-19.

<sup>127</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 119 and *Commemorative History*, 249.

<sup>128</sup> McDonald, *Nacogdoches*, 85.

<sup>129</sup> Joe E. Ericson, , “Nacogdoches Banks and Bankers,” in *Commemorative History of Nacogdoches*, 192-93.

<sup>130</sup> McDonald, *Nacogdoches*, 87.

<sup>131</sup> Joe E. Ericson, , “Nacogdoches Banks and Bankers,” in *Commemorative History of Nacogdoches*, 192-93.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 40

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Cotton & Compress Company was founded on W. Pilar in 1897 by John Schmidt and E.A. Blount to compress bales of cotton prior to rail shipment. The plant was acquired by Roland Jones in 1906 and operated until 1930. Other establishments organized during the 1880s and 1890s were the Alliance Cotton Yard, a cotton seed warehouse, and Sander's Cotton Platform on the east side of Banita Creek. A few refining facilities were built in this area, including C.T. Clark's Cotton Gin and Grist Mill, near Sturdevant's Cotton Yard, and the Merchants & Farmers Cotton Seed Oil Mill, which operated from 1896 to 1906 when it changed hands and was re-named the Nacogdoches Oil Mill. Within the commercial district proper, Rulfs expanded a one-story Mayer & Schmidt warehouse to become a cotton exchange at 305 E. Commerce St. (Property #68). Around 1898, he added a second floor and extended the eastern portion of the building to create more space for both transactions and storage. The Nacogdoches Cotton Exchange was a welcome addition, allowing local farmers to trade and negotiate prices closer to home (FIG. 17).

Service industries were also crucial to Nacogdoches's operation. While properties associated with the cotton and lumber were positioned near the railroad tracks, the majority of the town's commercial activity was interspersed on the small plateau around the *plaza principal*. For example, several blacksmiths, saddle and harness shops, livery stables, carriage houses, and wagon yards were scattered throughout the commercial district. Professional services were not lacking, and the town was host to a good number of surveyors, physicians and attorneys (who often officed in the second floor above retail spaces). For example, the Charles Hoya Land Office (Property #95), housed in a one-story brick building at the corner of Pecan and Pilar and designed by Houston architect Frank Rue in 1897, accommodated real estate transactions.

With the building of the railroad and the beginnings of a more diversified economy came an enormous push to bring new people and resources to Nacogdoches. Typical of this push is a small brochure published by Mrs. E. M. Loughery in 1895. *A Pen Picture of the City of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Their Present and Future: An Invitation to Immigration, Capital and Enterprise* extolled the virtues of the town and the surrounding agricultural lands, with a focus on drawing people from the east coast into the west. Declaring that "the great need of the county is the immediate introduction of TEN THOUSAND FARMERS," Loughery went on to say that the people of Nacogdoches were "NOT A RACE OF BARBARIANS."<sup>132</sup> Loughery was self-conscious of the perception of the South as "backward" and took pains to correct this image as part of her strategy to impart optimism:

The people of Nacogdoches county –seventeen thousand strong—are in the main, as intelligent, refined and progressive as any rural population in the older states, and I beg leave to remind my eastern readers that they have a much higher measure of hospitality—genuine, social, business hospitality—than any community of equal numbers in any of the eastern or northern states. They are MORE COSMOPOLITAN too in their general make up than the people of the older states. Few of them are "to the manor born."

They are congregated here from the older southern states, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia...The friction of diverse religious, political, social, mental, commercial, industrial and thought and habit, has worn away the provincial conceit and prejudice born of more homogeneous conditions and development in this heterogeneous mass, and on the broader field of opportunity a liberal comprehensive "WORLD CHARACTER" embracing the best thought, experience and tendencies of all the peoples represented,

<sup>132</sup> Loughery, *Pen Picture of the City of Nacogdoches*, quote from p. 9 and 29.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 41

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

and the result is everywhere seen in the boundless enterprise, liberal intelligence, liberal views and progressive ways of the community.<sup>133</sup>

As reinforcement of the cultural sophistication of Nacogdoches, fraternal organizations and other social clubs became a vital part of the community. For example, in 1894, the Cum Concilio Club for women began meeting weekly to discussion art and literature, including classics of the Italian Renaissance as well as of Texas folklore.

Still, as with many towns in the post-Reconstruction south, Nacogdoches continued to struggle with issues of race and violence. Though there was indeed a progressive side to Nacogdoches embodied by county sheriff A. J. Spradley, the opposite was embodied by the *Daily* and *Weekly Sentinel* editor, Bill Haltom. Spradley, a popular figure in the county, was an active supporter of the People's Party (established in 1892, the same year the group was founded nationally), which during the 1890s fought bitterly with the Democratic Party in Nacogdoches to attract black voters in this last decade before Jim Crow laws barred them from voting at all. Spradley attempted, for example, to empanel a jury with black members in 1894, but his efforts were blocked. He started a newspaper, the *Plaindealer*, also in 1894, to counteract the editorial page of Haltom's *Sentinel*. John B. Raymer, a prominent black populist, spoke in Nacogdoches in 1894 in support of Spradley's re-election as sheriff.<sup>134</sup> In fighting the inclusion of blacks in the political process, the Democratic party had an ally in Haltom, who frequently used the *Sentinel* as a pulpit. In 1900 he wrote:

The experiment of Negro suffrage in the South has failed so singlely (sic) and was such an unqualified crime against civilization from the start that even in the north the fact is now recognized that the southern states must protect themselves against it by constitutional amendment.<sup>135</sup>

Gary Borders, in *A Hanging in Nacogdoches* (2006) examines the tension between the Democrats and Populists and the culmination of their conflict in the "legal lynching" of Jim Buchanan, an African-American who pled guilty to and was convicted of the murder of a white family (Duncan, Nerva, and Allie Hicks) in Nacogdoches County in October 1902. Spradley was able to keep Buchanan's location a secret until a trial could be held, but his execution by hanging in the old *plaza principal* was rushed and the appeals process was forcibly waived by the pressure of a mob that wanted to burn Buchanan alive (FIG. 18).<sup>136</sup>

Racial and class tensions festered in Nacogdoches, particularly as economic expansion foundered. African-American men and poor whites mostly found employment in the agricultural and lumber industries. Though cotton production continued to dominate, a push for a more diversified crop system and an expansion into truck farming began. Cotton production tripled between 1880 and 1900 and associated industries grew in tandem. Though the number of cotton gins in the county was variable, one source reports that over 70 operated in 1906. A cotton seed oil mill opened in Nacogdoches in about 1902, crushing the seeds and refining the oil for use in manufacturing and food.<sup>137</sup>

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., p. 24-25.

<sup>134</sup> Gary B. Borders, *A Hanging in Nacogdoches: Murder, Race, Politics, and Polemics in Texas's Oldest Town, 1870-1916* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 66-73 and Handbook of Texas Online, s.v. "People's Party," <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/PP/wap1.html> (accessed August 14, 2006).

<sup>135</sup> Haltom, quoted in Borders, *A Hanging in Nacogdoches*, 80.

<sup>136</sup> Borders, *A Hanging in Nacogdoches*, ch. 14.

<sup>137</sup> "Nacogdoches Oil Mill Now Running at Full Capacity, Considered State's Cleanest," *Weekly Sentinel*, 5 Sept 1929, 4. In the article, which notes expansion of the mill, it is stated that "Mr. Adams has been with the oil mill for 27 years."

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 42

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

The lumber industry was also among those to benefit from improved rail connections. The timber industry expanded slowly in the two decades after the railroad arrived, but as demand for yellow pine in the northern states increased at the turn of the century, production picked up. In 1900, lumber employed about 300 people in Nacogdoches in both large sawmills and on small tree farms run by individuals.<sup>138</sup> In 1904, the first major lumber company in Nacogdoches County formed. This, the Hayward Lumber Company, employed 400 men by 1906, more than had been in the entire industry total just one year earlier. The plant was located near Lanana Creek east of downtown. In 1910, the Frost-Johnson Lumber Company bought Hayward. Under H. W. Whited of Frost-Johnson, timber conservation practices were first encouraged.

The growing lumber industry brought several associated businesses. In 1906 these included the Nacogdoches Crate and Box Factory, the Nacogdoches Show Case and Hardwood Manufacturing Company, the Banita Hardwood Manufacturing Company, and the Craven Lumber Company. In 1914, there were between 750 and 800 men employed in the lumber and associated industries, consisting mainly of including poor blacks and poor whites.

Alongside lumber, tobacco farming arrived in Nacogdoches County by the turn of the century. Investment in tobacco farming was encouraged by a 1903 federal study that showed the county's soil was "identical with that of Cuba, and other countries which grow the best qualities of the aromatic cigar tobacco."<sup>139</sup> An advertising booklet for the county proclaimed:

Eminent experts in the East unite in saying: '...we find that there are other soils in East Texas far superior to the tobacco growing districts of Florida, Connecticut and Cuba. This tobacco can be raised in Texas under more favorable conditions than in either of the above mentioned States owing to the fertility of the soil, negro labor, the quantity and cheapness of the lumber necessary for the building of the shades, and the long growing season.'<sup>140</sup>

As a result of increase in tobacco production, a tobacco storage warehouse and later a cigar-rolling factory opened in Nacogdoches. The facility on Pecan Street between Main and Hospital (Property #31), constructed in 1909 by John Cox for William Tausig, was used for storage, curing, and manufacturing the Spanish Maid Cigar until about 1914.<sup>141</sup> This served as an excellent example of the direct interdependence between the county's agricultural lands and the development of the downtown commercial district during this period.

Other light industries and manufacturers settled in Nacogdoches as well, including the Mahdeen Company. Founded by Frank Aikman and local barber John Needham (Mahdeen spelled backward) in 1912, the company began to sell hair tonic that Needham had developed in his shop. In 1917, the two commissioned Rulfs to design a brick building south of the square, to be built on the site of the old courthouse (Property #11). The Mahdeen Company occupied the basement, an office on the first floor and the third floor. The Garage Company, a local Ford dealer, shared the first floor and part of the

---

<sup>138</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 115.

<sup>139</sup> James Wilson, United States Secretary of Agriculture, quoted in Nacogdoches Land Company, *NACOGDOCHES County, The East Texas Gold Mine.*, 11.

<sup>140</sup> Nacogdoches Land Company, *NACOGDOCHES County, The East Texas Gold Mine.*, 12.

<sup>141</sup> Heritage Club of Nacogdoches, Marker for Cox Building 1909.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 43

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

second. The W. T. Wilson Grain Company was also on the second floor.<sup>142</sup> Mahdeen operated in Nacogdoches until 1965 when the company moved to Dallas after being purchased by Owen Laboratories.<sup>143</sup>

After the turn of the century, a series of destructive fires altered the commercial character of Nacogdoches once again. On 12 January 12 1903, the two-story brick building at the corner of Main and Church Streets (across from opera house) burned, destroying all neighboring buildings to the west. In total, eight buildings were destroyed and five damaged, including the Opera House, the Commercial National Bank, and the Wallace Hotel.<sup>144</sup> Just over a year later, on 16 May 1904, the Central Hotel at the corner Hospital and North was also destroyed by fire. In December 1906, a major fire decimated 100 block of East Main Street along the north side of the *plaza principal*.<sup>145</sup> Yet another fire, in January 1908, damaged a large portion of the 300 block along Main Street. The Mayer & Schmidt Building and the Davidson Building were completely destroyed during this conflagration.<sup>146</sup> The fire damage sustained in Nacogdoches between 1903 and 1908 was widely believed to be the result of an arsonist, and led to the organization of the city's fire department in 1907. In June of that same year, the city council awarded a contract to Fairbanks of New Orleans to provide fifty fire hydrants and a new supporting waterworks.<sup>147</sup>

Entertainment and recreation were not lacking in turn-of-the century Nacogdoches. In 1902, for example, Dial's Saloon, the Lone Star Saloon, the Hollow Log Saloon, and the Hub Saloon ran advertisements in the *Daily Sentinel*.<sup>148</sup> Ibarvo's Stone House was home to a disreputable saloon when it was demolished in 1902.<sup>149</sup> The sale of alcohol was prohibited in the county in 1905, and the saloons that had operated in town were closed. Yet a new entertainment venue soon replaced the saloon. In 1909, the first silent movies played at the Royal Theater on Main Street.<sup>150</sup> In April 1909, Aqua Vitae Park opened to great fanfare. The fourteen-acre "health resort" was located on the west side of Lanana Creek, and stretched along a portion of Main Street and along the east bank of the creek.<sup>151</sup> Similar to those at Mineral Wells, the waters at Aqua Vitae were rich in sulfates and carbonates thought to have great medicinal value. Investors in Nacogdoches constructed the park and mineral wells for public benefit (admission was free), bottling the healing waters for sale locally and statewide. (FIG. 19).<sup>152</sup>

Between 1910 and 1920, with twenty-five years of slow economic growth and money still a problem in this relatively poor county, Nacogdoches took on the most ambitious civic improvement process that it had yet seen. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, "local voters proved time and again unwilling to pay for public

---

<sup>142</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 136.

<sup>143</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 211.

<sup>144</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 122.

<sup>145</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 122.

<sup>146</sup> Carolyn Reeves Ericson, *Fires and Firemen of Nacogdoches, Texas*, 58-59.

<sup>147</sup> Ericson, *Fires and Firemen*, 4.

<sup>148</sup> Borders, *A Hanging in Nacogdoches*, 49.

<sup>149</sup> Borders, *A Hanging in Nacogdoches*, 40.

<sup>150</sup> "The Airdome presented films outdoors. In 1910 the Lyric Theatre replaced the Royal and it in turn was replaced by the Ideal in 1913. Admission costs were 5¢ and 10¢!" Zillmer, "Theatre in Nacogdoches," *Bicentennial Commemorative History*, 108.

<sup>151</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 125.

<sup>152</sup> See "Aqua Vitae Park," Old Town Printing Press, February 1997.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection 8 Page 44Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

improvements.”<sup>153</sup> However, in 1910, Nacogdoches turned to its concentrated attention to civic buildings and infrastructure for the first time in decades. In the space of ten years Nacogdoches constructed several new important public buildings. After the organization of the fire department in 1907, the new equipment needed a home. The city purchased a lot on the south side of the city square, and commissioned Rulfs to construct a city hall and fire department in 1910.<sup>154</sup> It was demolished in 1952 or 1953. By 1911, the county courthouse constructed in 1854-55 had fallen into disrepair. The *Daily Sentinel* reported that “the building is not only indecent, but dangerous.”<sup>155</sup> To remedy the public eyesore and nuisance, E. A. Blount offered a new site for the building on the corner of the old *plaza principal* at Main and North Streets. The city accepted his offer, and county voters approved a new building campaign. The new courthouse facility was completed in 1912 at a cost of \$90,000 (see FIG. 9).<sup>156</sup> The new passenger railroad depot was finished in 1911; extensive street paving and bridge building were also undertaken.

The quest for a new post office and federal building was a bit longer in the making. As early as 1905, a group of citizens in Nacogdoches had been interested in acquiring a federal building. In 1914, their efforts bore fruit in the form of a design for a one-story building designed to occupy the *plaza principal*. Though citizens had opposed building in the square in the past, this time the lure of federal funding overcame what were perhaps sentimental attachments. The square was surveyed, title disputes resolved, and the federal government paid \$5,000 for the lot. Since land for most other civic buildings had always been traditionally donated by private citizens, financial concerns were certainly foremost in the decision-making process. Though the lot was purchased in 1914, construction was delayed until January 1917, when a California contracting firm, Graeme McDonald Company, received the contract for construction. James Wetmore was the supervising architect, and created a small Classical Revival building be erected at an approximate cost of \$46,000. The federal building, which would also house the Post Office, was completed in early 1918.<sup>157</sup> Nacogdoches citizens were not immediately impressed with the façade, though clearly felt that building would serve its function. An editorial from the *Daily Sentinel* in 1918 declared that “while the building is not so imposing in its appearance from the outside as was expected, the interior is...a model of perfection in its appointments and workmanship, designed especially for the convenience of the enterprise that will occupy it.”<sup>158</sup>

Civic infrastructure also received concerted attention. After a devastating flood in 1902 destroyed most of the bridges in town, with the exception of the iron bridge over Main Street,<sup>159</sup> bridge building and street paving and took center stage in the teens. In 1910, a steel bridge was built over La Nana Creek on East Main,<sup>160</sup> and in 1918 two concrete bridges were constructed over Banita Creek at Main and Fredonia Streets. Despite these improvements, Nacogdoches’s streets still turned into a sea of mud with each rain. Paving soon became a major concern. In 1914, some portions of the streets of the

<sup>153</sup> Borders, *A Hanging in Nacogdoches*, 39. And, on page 50: “With a few exceptions, such as the approval of bonds in 1902 to create the Nacogdoches school district, most campaigns for civic progress—whether for paved streets, a professional fire department, a waterworks, or a new jail and courthouse—failed miserably.”

<sup>154</sup> In December 1908, acting on authority given him by the City Council, Sturdevant negotiated the purchase of the Hoya lot on the south side of the public square, where some two years later a brick building was completed to house the Fire Department’s equipment and the City Hall. Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 123.

<sup>155</sup> *Daily Sentinel*, 26 January 1911, quoted in Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 121.

<sup>156</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 122.

<sup>157</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 130.

<sup>158</sup> *Daily Sentinel*, 13 February 1918, quoted in Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 130.

<sup>159</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 124.

<sup>160</sup> Historic and Architectural Resources of Nacogdoches.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 45

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

commercial center were paved with gravel, including Mound Street, Main Street along the square, and Pilar Street to the Banita Bridge. North Street was graveled in 1915.<sup>161</sup> But these first steps proved unsatisfactory, and Mayor Matthews complained in June 1915 that “the principal street of our town which first meets the gaze of the visitor entering it, is the one half paved from the depot to the intersection of North and Main streets, the other half is an eye sore to every citizen of the city who would like to make a credible showing to the “stranger” within our gates.”<sup>162</sup> In 1918, Nacogdoches contracted with a Dallas company to provide wood-block paving for the entire commercial district and the city installed ornamental street lamps at street corners and the Main Street bridges. The wood block pavers were made of pine that was shrank and swelled with variations in rain and heat and were immediately problematic. The city had paid \$90,000 for this “best pine block pavement” and it decided to sue the company to recover some of the funds wasted in the venture. After settling out of court, the city received only \$600 in damages.<sup>163</sup>

Other public services experienced vast improvements in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Southern Ice Utilities Company, later known as the Nacogdoches Ice Company, formed in 1905 off West Main at Cox and Bremond Streets just across the railroad tracks from downtown. Its location along the railroad allowed it both to supply townspeople with ice for domestic purposes, but also enabled easy loading of ice into warehouses and rail cars to support the shipping of agricultural goods.<sup>164</sup> With an initial capacity of 20 tons, by 1924 the plant doubled its capacity. Brothers Lynus and Ulric Wilson ran the plant, whose monthly payroll had reached \$1500 to \$2000 in 1924.

The provision for a public water supply and sewerage began in 1914, concurrent with the construction of the post office and federal building (perhaps because the well in the public square was to disappear). At this time, city and citizens partnered to share the cost of drilling a fourth artesian well to provide city water. This well, along with the three earlier wells, doubled the cities supply of artesian water.<sup>165</sup> All were was located near the light plant, just north of the courthouse near the H.E.&W.T. Railroad and Banita Creek.<sup>166</sup> City water was stored in a concrete storage tank that was built in 1916 to the capacity of 130,000 gallons, and served as part of a supply system that included the four wells and various pumps. In 1917, civil engineers surveyed land for the construction of a new sewer system that would service most if not all parts of the city. The estimated cost was \$40,000, but the mayor and council “promised that no new taxes would be necessary to pay for it.”<sup>167</sup> By March 1918, the new system was installed along with nine new miles of sewer line that was meant to give access to anyone living within 150 feet of the line.<sup>168</sup>

## Community Growth in Nacogdoches, 1920-1945

By 1920, Nacogdoches was becoming a “modern” city, with a “city-owned waterworks, municipal electric system (originally privately owned, but the city bought the plant for \$40,000), and a privately-owned telephone system. Public transit was provided by “Jitney” car known as “the cricket” that ran a North Street Mound Street loop to the Union

<sup>161</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 131-32.

<sup>162</sup> *Daily Sentinel* 12 June 1915, quoted in Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 132.

<sup>163</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 132.

<sup>164</sup> “Great Ice Plant Is Pioneer Industry of All East Texas Area”, *Weekly Sentinel*, 23 May 1929, p. 8.

<sup>165</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 135.

<sup>166</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 135.

<sup>167</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 135.

<sup>168</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 135.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 46

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Depot.”<sup>169</sup> The interest in civic improvement that had begun in the 1910s continued. In 1923 the failed wood-block pavers were replaced with the red brick that remains today (FIG. 20). Bridge improvements were forced by a flood in April 1922, which washed out the South Street bridge across Banita Creek and sent it downstream where it lodged on the Nacogdoches & Southeastern Railroad bridge, destroying both.<sup>170</sup>

As private citizens had banded together in the early 1880s to ensure that the railroad came to Nacogdoches, they again came together in the 1920s to foster further economic development. “The Citizens Committee,” later known as the Nacogdoches Booster Club, formed to persuade state officials to locate a new Teachers College in town. The college had been authorized by the legislature in 1917, but World War I interrupted its formation and funding. After the war, the Nacogdoches citizens group published “Twenty-Three Reasons Why the Stephen F. Austin State Normal Ought to Be Located in Nacogdoches.” The reasons were:

Nacogdoches is the center of the section to be served...; is the most accessible city...; has 5,000 people in the city and 32,000 in the county who would be proud...; its schools rank among the best in the South...; guarantees 250 children for a training school...; once hosted Nacogdoches University...; has high moral tone...; the jail is empty; is a city of refined homes...; has nine churches...; has a delightfully mild climate...; is a city of good health...; has a well-equipped light and power plant...; the electricity is cheaper...; has a good sewage system...; has pure artesian water...; and three, two-story hotels...; has 22 boarding houses...; has rare natural beauty...; has a progressive business spirit...; has ample entertainment facilities...; offers superior (building) sites...” is “the Cradle of Texas Liberty”...; and, No. 23...Nacogdoches links Old Texas With The New.<sup>171</sup>

The promise of a new college in Nacogdoches gave the town a much-needed financial anchor, bringing both new jobs and a steady flow of students. The Teachers College opened on North Street in 1923, on a campus just two miles north of the original commercial district. New buildings and businesses emerged along North Street to serve this population, including restaurants, lodging houses, and grocery stores.

The central commercial district itself did not grow specifically in response to the Teachers College, but its survival was insured by the influx of people and capital. In 1919, the Nacogdoches Chamber of Commerce formed, becoming a major force in citizen-driven efforts to encourage civic and economic development. Major figures in the Chamber in the 1920s and 1930s included W. U. Perkins, Capt. I. L. Sturdevant, Carl Monk, and A. T. Mast. As a result of the Chamber’s efforts in the early 1920s, Nacogdoches recruited several small manufacturing and light industrial businesses. Many of these businesses had their headquarters in and around the main commercial district. One of these was the Mize Department Store and clothing manufacturing facility. In 1925, B. H. and W. A. Mize opened the Mize Brothers Department Store on Hospital Street, and established a dress-making plant that employed 200 women. The Hunt Plumbing and Supply Company and McKinney Contractors also got their start in the 1920s.<sup>172</sup> In 1930, the Texas Farm Products Company was established, opening a feed mill in 1931. It marketed Lone Star Cream Meal and Lone Star Pearl Meal made from locally-grown corn. The plant was intended to keep farmers’ money within the county: “The idea is that

<sup>169</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 135.

<sup>170</sup> Joe E. Ericson, “And The Rains Came,” *Nacogdoches Jaycees, Nacogdoches Bicentennial Commemorative History*, 213.

<sup>171</sup> As excerpted by Archie P. McDonald in “SFASU,” All Things Historical syndicated column of September 28, 2005 column, viewed online at <<http://www.texasescapes.com/AllThingsHistorical/SFASU-AM905.htm>>.

<sup>172</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 154-55.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 47

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

if half a million dollars was spent for fertilizer last year in Nacogdoches County, every cent of which was sent out of the county, why not keep all this money in Nacogdoches by building a fertilizer factory at home.”<sup>173</sup>

With the growth of small industry and the expansion of agriculturally-related production, the town of Nacogdoches was able to maintain a business relationship with the agricultural families and businesses of the County, thus ensuring its vitally not only as the county seat, but as a regional center of commerce. Both county government and regional business still took place in town. The central commercial district continued to supply groceries, household goods, agricultural implements and, increasingly, cars and automotive supplies. Passenger service on the regional train lines, regional bus lines (Airline Motor Coaches opened a terminal at 224 N. Fredonia in 1931) and local hotel accommodations continued to be focused in the commercial district.

## “Times is Hard:” Nacogdoches and the Depression

The late 1920s and early 1930s brought extremes in financial prosperity and losses. The economic hardship that devastated the United States in October 1929 did not immediately affect Nacogdoches, as the county was still relatively isolated. Still, the records of the Masonic Lodge indicated that Nacogdoches, like the rest of the country, suffered during the Depression. Members, for example, were unable to pay dues and let their memberships lapse, and many requested financial assistance from the group. By 1933, however, the Lodge had to deny all further requests “due to its financial condition.” Member Wylie J. Hicks wrote simply that “Times is hard.”<sup>174</sup>

The onset of the Depression quickened the transformation of Nacogdoches local economy away from its traditional dependence on cotton and lumber.<sup>175</sup> Though the promotion of truck farming had long been underway, progress was seen in the 1930s as poor cotton production and prices combined with small farmers’ need to grow food for their families. Cotton and corn, the two major crops in the area, had exhausted the land and were barely profitable. In 1934, for example, the amount of cotton ginned in Nacogdoches county dropped by nearly one-third, from 17,057 to 12,779 bales of cotton.<sup>176</sup> A slight resurgence occurred in 1937, but by 1938, this number had declined again to 12,060 bales.<sup>177</sup> This should be compared to the larger cotton producing counties, such as Ellis, who ginned 102,628 in 1937, and Dawson at 106,324 in the same year.

During the Depression, the Soil Conservation Corps brought a new infusion of energy and ideas about how to farm in the soils of east Texas, and provided a major catalyst in fueling this transformation. The goal of the Corps was to rest and revitalize the soil as well as introduce new crops that would generate more income for local farmers. As a result, new crops did appear in Nacogdoches County, particularly tomatoes, peas, potatoes, and watermelon, and new facilities to

<sup>173</sup> “Big Fertilizer Factor to Be Established at Nacogdoches,” *Weekly Sentinel*, 15 January 1930, 1.

<sup>174</sup> Archie P. McDonald, *By Early Candlelight: The Story of Old Milam*. (Ft. Worth: Masonic Home Press, 1967), 126-27.

<sup>175</sup> Although American urban centers had enjoyed nearly a decade of progress and prosperity during the 1920s, farmers had already experienced ten years of declining fortune. Between 1923 and 1929, prices received by farmers were 40 to 50 percent above that of pre-war years, but the cost of seeds, goods, and machinery was at least 60 percent higher. Part of the decline in the agricultural economy was attributed to a reduction in international demand for cotton following World War I, as foreign competition and new synthetic materials reduced the demand for American-grown cotton fiber.

<sup>176</sup> “Cotton Ginning Short Nearly 5000 bales this Year,” *Weekly Sentinel*, 15 November 1934, 1.

<sup>177</sup> *Texas Almanac* 1939.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 48

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

process and sell those crops were built within the commercial district. Occasional articles appeared in the *Sentinel* promoting truck farming to Nacogdocheans. In 1925, J. W. Hutson wrote:

If you ever intend to get out of debt and quit planting your crop in cotton, now is the time. Leave off part of your cotton crop and get in the truck deal with us. If you plant one or two acres of tomatoes, peas, melons, or cantaloupes, or some of the money things we are growing to ship, it will give each of us some early money which I am sure we all need. Just a few of us cannot do much so please plant a few acres of truck and help all you can—we need you. Come out to the next truck growers' meeting on January 2, at the court house. Lets get together and stay together and make 1926 worth while.<sup>178</sup>

As early as the mid-1920s, the Nacogdoches County Fair began to focus on demonstrating the value of truck farming with exhibits about the varied crops available for local farmers to produce. The 1929 county fair had a "negro day" that sought to include, on some level, the African-American population in the agricultural transformation of the region.<sup>179</sup> A canning plant opened in 1929, ready for that year's crop of tomatoes and peas. Roland Jones of the Nacogdoches Compress Company had pledged in February that if local farmers promised to plant 300 acres of tomatoes, he would build the canning factory on West Main with a payroll of \$6,000 per month. By the end of March, work on the new plant began and canning began in June.<sup>180</sup> By 1930, the plant expanded and took the name East Texas Canning Company.<sup>181</sup>

Agricultural production increasingly focused not only on truck farming, but also on livestock, dairy and poultry. Federal aid agencies deployed to help local ranchers were primarily concerned with improving care for ailing livestock (diseases were common in humid climates), and improving pasture management.<sup>182</sup> Stock-raising tripled after 1940, and gave new purpose to land that would no longer provide agricultural profits. Alongside a new interest in livestock, dairy and poultry production increased dramatically during the 1940s. Dairy income grew by five times between 1940 and 1948; in 1949 there were 230 dairies in Nacogdoches county. Poultry income doubled between 1941 and 1945 and the first broiler house opened in 1948.<sup>183</sup> As an adjunct to a growing dairy industry, the Pure Ice and Milk Company built a new plant in Nacogdoches in 1929 to bottle milk and make ice cream. The *Sentinel* heralded the arrival of the new plant with a spirit of boosterism: "...the real big objective is that of developing the whole milk business and the dairy business in the Nacogdoches area. The dairy business is now making Tyler, an east Texas town with no better natural advantages than Nacogdoches the big outstanding industrial center of all this section. That has been done at Tyler may be done at Nacogdoches."<sup>184</sup>

<sup>178</sup> J. W. Hutson, "Farmers Urged to Grow Truck Crops Here in Next Year," *Weekly Sentinel*, 31 December 1925, 1.

<sup>179</sup> "Nacogdoches Fair Program Is to Be the Best in History," and "Colored Exhibits at Fair to Be Very Extensive," *Weekly Sentinel* 17 October 1929, 1 and 8. "Nacogdoches County Fair Was Success Says Pres. Hinds," *Weekly Sentinel* 31 October 1929, 1. The fair had 45,000 attendees and had receipts of \$4500 and expenses of \$3500.

<sup>180</sup> "Canning Factory," *Weekly Sentinel* 21 February 1929, 1; "The Canning Plant at Nacogdoches Now and Assured Fact," 7 March 1929, 1.; "Nacogdoches Canning Plant Makes Initial Run Wednesday Morning," *Weekly Sentinel*, 27 June 1929, 1.

<sup>181</sup> "All Tomato Contracts are to Be Protected Says Roland Jones," *Weekly Sentinel* 30 March 1930, 1.

<sup>182</sup> McDonald, *Nacogdoches*, 87.

<sup>183</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 165; Weems, "Gateway of a Gaining Nation," 119.

<sup>184</sup> "Development of Dairy Industry Is Objective Sought in Location of Big Plant at Nacogdoches," *Weekly Sentinel*, 10 January 1929, 1.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 49

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Alongside the fading cotton economy, the lumber industry began to suffer. By the 1920s, most of the first-growth forest had been lumbered in Nacogdoches County. With this depletion, lumbermen were encouraged to practice new conservation and planting practices to ensure the long-term viability of the lumber industry. Giles Haltom, the editor of the *Sentinel* in the 1920s, wrote: "Nacogdoches has everything to gain and nothing to lose in encouraging the renewal of commercial forests and practical forestry on 50 percent of over 338,880 acres of its total land area. When the nominal acreage of virgin timber, now remaining, has been cut, and this will occur within the next ten years, the stumpage value of second growth pine will increase at a rapid rate. As time goes on our second growth timber will be harvested with more care than is now practiced..."<sup>185</sup> The Depression had a dramatic impact on the Texas lumber industry, both because virgin growth forest was nearly exhausted and because prices for lumber collapsed in 1932 – "in that year Texas mills produced only 354 million board feet of finished lumber, comparable to production in 1880."<sup>186</sup> The result for Nacogdoches was felt in very real terms when Frost-Johnson was forced to reduce its operating schedule drastically. It did not lay off any employees, but the work schedule was reduced to the extent that some only worked a few days a month. In the company's mill town just south of the commercial district, additional land was cleared to allow workers to plant gardens to provide themselves with much-needed food.<sup>187</sup>

Federal programs did make some small impact in helping Nacogdoches through the Depression. Along with the Soil Conservation Service, the Rural Electrification Administration, the Farmers Home Administration, the Forest Service, and other aid agencies made an appearance in Nacogdoches. New Deal subsidies available for land owners who allowed acreage to lie fallow, the economic structure of Nacogdoches was severely impacted. Over 60% of farmers in the county were tenants, meaning they were often left without land to work. Many of these tenant farmers left for Houston or Dallas, particularly with the start of the war industries in the 1940s. By 1950, the number of farms in Nacogdoches were half that of 1930.

A branch of the Civil Works Administration (CWA) was headquartered in Nacogdoches in the Milam Lodge Building, employing upwards of 85 people. The office closed in 1934 when the program was discontinued.<sup>188</sup> Upon its closure, an emergency feed loan office opened in the same location and the CWA was careful to announce that: "The commissary will continue on Church Street providing food for those out of employment or unable to work and a bigger more complete program is planned for the healthy and sanitation department which will come under the new program."<sup>189</sup> The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) assembled a "tree army" in East Texas, employing camps of young, unmarried men who worked in the remote timber fields. In 1934, advertisements in the *Sentinel* indicated that the closest camp for Nacogdoches residents was at Lufkin and that the pay for an enlistee, who had to be male, 18-25, unmarried but with dependents, was \$30 per month.<sup>190</sup>

Further aid was provided in the form of road construction projects. Federal relief funding through the Highway Department made possible an expansion of county road building that resulted in great improvements in the area transportation networks. The paving of Highway 21 east from Nacogdoches to the Angelina River, of Highway 35 north,

<sup>185</sup> Giles Haltom, "Is Nacogdoches County Interested in Forestry?" *Weekly Sentinel*, 19 March 1925, 4.

<sup>186</sup> Maxwell and Baker, *Sawdust Empire*, 201.

<sup>187</sup> Maxwell and Baker, *Sawdust Empire*, 201.

<sup>188</sup> "Employees of CWA Offices Enjoy Picnic at Angelina River Saturday," *Weekly Sentinel*, 1 March 1934, 8.

<sup>189</sup> "Emergency Feed Loan Office Opened at 116 North Church Street," *Weekly Sentinel* 2 July 1934, 7. "Entire CWA Program to Cease in Nacogdoches County Thursday night," *Weekly Sentinel* 29 March 1934, 8.

<sup>190</sup> "Enlistments Open for Tree Army to Nacogdoches Boys," *Weekly Sentinel*, 26 July 1934, 1.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 50

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Highway 7 to Center, and a new bridge across the Angelina River (concrete series of 30 foot arches, 1,950 feet long, three lanes of traffic) all employed men in the county. The Highway Committee of the Chamber of Commerce aggressively pursued bringing highway monies to the county; its members included Carl Monk and Moss Adams.<sup>191</sup> From 1938 to 1940, the Work Projects Administration also sponsored the construction of a concrete bridge over Banita Creek at Pecan Street (Property #131). A.D. Muckleroy was the engineer, and E.B. Haley supervised the construction.

Aid and work programs may have helped smaller local businesses and small farmers a bit, but many still had difficulty weathering the financial hardship of the early 1930s. In early 1934, Nacogdoches's economy received a temporary boon, or at least a glimpse of future profits when J. C. Penney arrived as a national retailer. They purchased the building at 106 Pecan Street, (Property #17), substantially remodeling both the exterior and the interior, and adding a second story to the rear. The project not only provided a brief flurry of building, but injected new life around the plaza.<sup>192</sup>

Despite this small glimmer of financial hope, in 1934 civic boosters, including local architect H. B. Tucker, chairman of the Chamber of Commerce's committee on the National Better Housing Program acknowledged that there had been "five years of stagnation in the building industry." Tucker stated that "quite a large percentage of the structures in Nacogdoches are greatly in need of repair....Many properties have reached a point where it is harly (sic) worth making any effort to salvage them." Tucker and others hoped that the federally sponsored National Better Housing Program would provide a needed stimulus to building.<sup>193</sup>

As the Depression came to a close and World War II loomed on the horizon, the Teacher's College continued to financially anchor the community, particularly as in the coming absence of male laborers that made farming extremely difficult. In 1941, at the beginning of the war, college enrollment was about 1,000. With the departure of male students who enlisted, the college's president, Dr. Paul L. Boynton, feared they would not be able to stay open. He made an agreement with the army to use the college's facilities to train new members of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. Groups of women went through basic training in Des Moines, Iowa and then came to Nacogdoches to live in the college's dormitories and take classes specifically to train them for the clerical and support duties they would take on in the Army.<sup>194</sup> Thus Nacogdoches, though its male workforce was largely absent during the first half of the decade, did find a new influx of people and jobs for teachers to sustain the town during this slow economic period.

In addition to the educational basis for economic stability, a number of war-related industries began to provide the town with opportunity. In 1942, NIBCO located a factory that produced parts for Navy destroyers and submarines and other boats on South Fredonia Street. This plant was a subsidiary of the Northern Indiana Brass Company (Founded 1904), which began as a manufacturer of brass fittings for plumbing. The Nacogdoches Chamber of Commerce was instrumental in bringing the plant to town, and it remains in operation today, manufacturing metal valves and fittings (FIG. 21).<sup>195</sup>

<sup>191</sup> "Highway Work to Begin in Doches County," and "Highway Committee Entertains Huffman and Group from Lufkin at the Liberty Hotel Today" *Weekly Sentinel*, 26 July 1934, 6 and 7.

<sup>192</sup> "J. C. Penney Company Will Open Store on Pecan Street Here Soon," *Weekly Sentinel*, 25 January 1934, 8.

<sup>193</sup> "Purpose of Local Better Housing Program Outlined by Committee," *Weekly Sentinel*, 15 November 1934, 8.

<sup>194</sup> Archie P. McDonald, "WACs" Sept. 1-7, 2002, All Things Historical syndicated column, viewed online at <<http://www.texasescapes.com/AllThingsHistorical/WACs-Womens-Army-Corps-AM902.htm>>. See also Clarice Pollard, *Laugh, Cry, and Remember: The Journal of A G.I. Lady* (1991).

<sup>195</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 172.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 51

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

While the population of Nacogdoches County grew from 27,406 in 1910 to 28,457 in 1920, growth in the decade of the 1930s was at a standstill. In 1938 was estimated at 30,290 – the same number as was reported in the 1930 Census. The county remained rural, with an estimated 24,600 living rurally and the majority of these, in 1930, on farms. The urban population was limited to around 5,000, with most of these residing in Nacogdoches, whose population had grown to between 5,687 and 6,000 by 1939. The county population was comprised primarily of residents who identified themselves as white, with the Negro population reported at 7,456. To note how mobile – or immobile – this population was, there were only 5,600 registered vehicles in county in 1938 (up from 3,304 in 1925 and 2,236 in 1923).<sup>196</sup>

## Nacogdoches in the post-World War II period (to 1957)

Between 1940 and 1960, the population of Nacogdoches County declined from 35,392 to 28,046. But the population of Nacogdoches nearly doubled, from 7,538 in 1940 to 12,327 in 1950. Between 1950 and 1960, however, the town remained stable, adding only another 347 people, totaling 12,674. For the first time in its history, the town made up nearly half the population of the county. This was in large part due to the gradual and continued decline of agriculture in the region. In 1950, census statistics indicated that Nacogdoches County had 65-70% of its population employed in manufacturing, with 15-20% employed by the lumber industry. Wages were stagnant and the area of northeast Texas was identified as one of “deep poverty.”<sup>197</sup> The town of Nacogdoches had the lowest median income of any in the region at \$1,599 per year per household and 57.7% of town residents earning less than \$2,000 per year.<sup>198</sup>

The poverty of the area’s workers was a stimulus for labor agitation and a rise of interest in unionization. The Frost-Johnson lumber mill was the focus of AFL and CIO unionization agitators in 1947. With approximately 300 employees, 75% of whom were African-American, the organizers hoped to secure higher wages and better job security for blacks, who were the lowest paid workers at the mill.<sup>199</sup> C. W. Rice, editor of the Negro Labor News published in Houston, came to Nacogdoches to speak out against unionization, stating that “Negroes are still the first to be fired and the last to be hired all over the country. This is not true in Nacogdoches County.”<sup>200</sup> The push to unionize, vigorously opposed by Nacogdoches’ business community, failed, but not without Rice himself being arrested and falsely accused of assaulting a labor organizer.<sup>201</sup> The *Daily Sentinel* in denouncing the injustice declared: “Yes, he’s a Negro but we resent any citizen being treated in that manner.”<sup>202</sup>

After the war, the economy of Nacogdoches was stimulated by the return of servicemen who began to establish a series of new businesses. New car dealerships, hardware stores, dress shops, restaurants, and cafes populated the streets of the commercial district. NIBCO, the only war-time industry to start-up in Nacogdoches, chose to remain. NIBCO in fact enlarged its facilities and increased its production capacity by 50% in 1947.<sup>203</sup> In this same year, a new and larger canning facility moved to Nacogdoches from Carthage. Growth continued into the 1950s, with the Texas Farm Products Company

<sup>196</sup> *Texas Almanac* 1926.

<sup>197</sup> Ruth A. Allen, *East Texas Lumber Workers: An Economic and Social Picture, 1870-1950* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1961), 3-7.

<sup>198</sup> Allen, *East Texas Lumber Workers*, 14.

<sup>199</sup> “Frost Mill Not Worried Over Union’s Agitation,” *Daily Sentinel* 21 August 1947, 1.

<sup>200</sup> “Colored Citizens Told to ‘Wake Up and Think’,” *Daily Sentinel* 20 August 1947, 1.

<sup>201</sup> “Charges Against Editor Dismissed,” *Daily Sentinel*, 1 September 1947, 1.

<sup>202</sup> “An Injustice Done,” *Daily Sentinel*, 1 September 1947, 4.

<sup>203</sup> “NIBCO to Enlarge,” *Daily Sentinel*, 16 December 1947, 1. Original building dated to 1942.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 52

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

building a new feed warehouse in 1952, the opening of a new plant for the Lone Star Phosphate Company, and the formation of the Dr. Pepper Bottling Company on South Street.<sup>204</sup> Nacogdoches was set to receive a huge boon in 1956 when Bassons Industries Corporation agreed to open plastic factory – requiring \$150,000 local investment; unfortunately, they defaulted and the city forfeited their invested money.<sup>205</sup>

As the flat population figures between 1950 and 1960 indicated, there was still a concern about the economic health of the town. The last cotton gins closed around 1950, and in 1952, Frost-Johnson was sold to the Olin Company which then quickly re-sold to the International Paper Company (IPC). In 1956, IPC shut the mill down, resulting in the loss of 300 jobs.<sup>206</sup> With such a major employer gone, the search was on again for a stimulus to the town's economy.<sup>207</sup> Various portions of the old Frost-Johnson complex and cotton facilities were repurposed to serve other businesses, such as Gay Products, who in 1966 began manufacturing aluminum furniture in the M. A. Anderson Grain building on the southeast portion of the Frost-Johnson complex.<sup>208</sup>

With a bit of a recovery, a great deal of new building occurred to the north of the historic town center, nearer to Stephen F. Austin State University. A "hometown boy," visiting from his new home in New York, commented to the *Daily Sentinel* in 1947 that he was impressed with the town's, and especially the college area's, post-war growth.<sup>209</sup> In order to compete with these newer, more "modern" facilities on the north side of town, businesses in the historic center updated their quarters. The first order of business was to updated parking facilities. With automobiles becoming increasingly common, the commercial district struggled to accommodate vehicles on the narrow and winding streets. Parking meters were installed in 1947 both to generate revenue and to keep people from parking their cars and leaving them for long periods of time, clogging up potential spots for shoppers. On their first day of operation in August 1947, the *Daily Sentinel* reported that "many housewives heaved sighs of gratitude today as they drove into town and easily found plenty of parking spaces just ready and willing to be occupied at small price."<sup>210</sup> In this same year, a city parking lot was created the same year on West Main, bounded by Taylor Avenue and Hospital Street.<sup>211</sup>

Several large construction projects marked downtown Nacogdoches's growth in the 1950s and into the early 1960s. The most significant of these was the creation of the Fredonia Hotel by a coalition of community investors led by the Chamber of Commerce. Since the late 1940s, Nacogdoches boosters had been investigating the possibility of building a community-owned hotel and conference center as a draw for regional tourism and business meetings.<sup>212</sup> The Chamber of Commerce had organized places for visitors to stay when large groups came to town in the early 1930s: in 1934, for example, a meeting of 500 Methodist ministers converged on Nacogdoches. Rooms in all hotels and boarding houses were reserved and bedrooms in private homes were reserved for the visitors as well.<sup>213</sup> A "Great Confederate Reunion"

<sup>204</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 197.

<sup>205</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 199.

<sup>206</sup> Maxwell and Baker, *Sawdust Empire*, 120.

<sup>207</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 199.

<sup>208</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 210.

<sup>209</sup> "Visitor Impressed With Growth," *Daily Sentinel*, 22 July 1947.

<sup>210</sup> "Parking Meters in Operation Monday," *Daily Sentinel* 4 August 1947, 1.

<sup>211</sup> "Parking Project Near Completion," *Daily Sentinel*, 25 July 1947, 1.

<sup>212</sup> "Mize Heads Hotel Committee," *Daily Sentinel*, 3 September 1947, 1; "Plan for Hotel Is Studied," *Daily Sentinel*, 28 August 1947, 1. "Community Hotel Idea Is Dimmed," *Daily Sentinel*, 16 September 1947, 1.

<sup>213</sup> "Plans for Conference Here Going Forward More Rooms Needed," *Weekly Sentinel*, 11 October 1934, 8.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection 8 Page 53Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

for Texas veterans, sons of veterans, and grandsons of veterans was held in Nacogdoches in September 1929, necessitating a similar network of hotel rooms and rooms in private houses. The meetings of the group were held in the county courthouse.<sup>214</sup> And, on a smaller scale the East Texas Division of the Texas Motor Bus Owners Association met in Nacogdoches in 1929, having their meetings in the Chamber of Commerce's rooms and their banquet at the Liberty Hotel.<sup>215</sup> A new facility would provide hotel rooms for all and a meeting and banquet facility all in one place. With a clear need, in 1952, a group of businessmen formed the New Hotel Campaign for Nacogdoches, also the called Community Hotel Company. Led by Jack McKinney (McKinney Drilling Company), J. Elbert Reese, and R.G. Muckleroy, they began to sell stock to citizens in order to finance the project. Approximately 1100 local businessmen invested,<sup>216</sup> including Carl Monk who was also on the executive committee, with one bid of much as \$10,000.<sup>217</sup> The total amount pledged for the construction of the hotel was \$500,000.<sup>218</sup> Land was acquired along Hospital Street between Fredonia and Mound, and J. N. McCammon (the architect of the present-day Nacogdoches County Courthouse) began to design plans for the Fredonia. After a number of older buildings were demolished to make way, the groundbreaking was held in 1954. WS Bellows Construction Company of Houston, led by Frank Bellow, constructed the six-story building of reinforced concrete, accented with "New Orleans" cast iron grillwork across the plate glass façade of the tower slab. The Hotel Fredonia was designed as a "modern contemporary-styled hotel building,"<sup>219</sup> entirely air-conditioned, and featuring 100 rooms, conference facilities for 600, a patio and a kidney-shaped heated pool surround by semi-circle of cabana suites. With a coffee shop and guest parking for 100, the hotel covered entire city block. The interiors were designed by Titche-Goettinger of Dallas.<sup>220</sup> The Fredonia opened with much fanfare April 1, 1955. For over a decade, between 1955 and 1967, this was reputedly the most successful community-owned hotel in the nation.<sup>221</sup> So successful was the venture that they were able to expand, constructing the 30-unti Oak Terrace in 1960.<sup>222</sup> However, by 1968, the hotel faced financial difficulties and the possibility of foreclosure with a debt of nearly \$250,000. The Fredonia began looking for a buyer. It was eventually sold to Arthur Temple of Diboll, Texas for \$325,000, "a near total loss" on the initial investment made by the community.<sup>223</sup> Sheraton Hotels purchased the facility in 1970, and it was sold again in 1976.

While many businesses began to remodel their older properties, many built new facilities, often demolishing older properties in the process. New additions to the downtown area in the 1950s included the Main Theater of 1951 (Property #47). The new City Hall-Fire Station (Property #9) was constructed in 1953, replacing the Rulfs-built building which in 1947 was described as "falling apart" with sagging floors and ceilings.<sup>224</sup> The new fire department was set to attend to a

<sup>214</sup> "Great Confederate Reunion Is to Be Held Here in September," and "General Summers Receives Information Concerning Reunion," *Weekly Sentinel*, 27 June 1929, 1 and 18 July 1929, 8. The latter article instructed attendees to write to the Nacogdoches Chamber of Commerce for a place to stay in "hotels, boarding houses, dormitories, and private homes."

<sup>215</sup> "Motor Bus Operators Had Fine Program 'Doches - Tuesday,'" *Weekly Sentinel*, 21 March 1929, 8.

<sup>216</sup> *Houston Chronicle* 3/29/1955

<sup>217</sup> *Texas Hotel Review*, June 1955: 18.

<sup>218</sup> "A Big Night for all at Hotel Victory Dinner." *Dailey Sentinel*, Dec 9, 1952

<sup>219</sup> *Texas Hotel Review*, June 1955: 18.

<sup>220</sup> *Texas Hotel Review*, June 1955: 18.

<sup>221</sup> *Daily Sentinel* September 5, 1969.

<sup>222</sup> *Daily Sentinel* April 29, 1960

<sup>223</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 211.

<sup>224</sup> "Fire Department's Face Is Really Red," *Daily Sentinel*, 15 September 1947, 1.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 54

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

series of fires that occurred in 1953, in which the Sanitary Laundry and Western Auto Store on East Main were heavily damaged, and the First Baptist Church on North Street was destroyed.<sup>225</sup>

Businesses that did not demolish and rebuild found other ways to modernize. Neon signs were installed at several locations in the late 1940s, including the Commercial National Bank, Branch-Patton Hardware, Turner's Pharmacy (318 Main St.), and Pool-Perkins Pharmacy (116 Main St.). These signs appear to have been purchased from a vendor in Lufkin.<sup>226</sup> The Liberty Hotel remodeled in 1947 with a "newly redecorated lobby, banquet hall; coffee shop and kitchen."<sup>227</sup>

In light of all of these improvements, in 1948, a new school building campaign commenced. Not only did Nacogdoches need to replace the aging high school (the old Nacogdoches High School Building at Washington Square was torn down in 1956), the town required a series of facilities to serve a segregated school district, even after *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954. Despite this historic ruling, desegregation did not occur in Nacogdoches until 1970.

With all of these changes occurring rapidly, Nacogdoches for the first time began to implement a systematic county-wide effort to improve roads and infrastructure, led by the newly established city planning commission, which formed in 1947 at the urging of *Daily Sentinel* editor Victor Fain. The county, by a narrow vote, approved a unit system for managing the long-neglected county roads. A county engineer, responsible for managing the entire road system was hired in 1948.<sup>228</sup> In 1947, the process began that would eventually lead to the widening of North Street in 1949.

Other improvements to the civic infrastructure included a renewed water system, prompted by a series of water shortages in the late 1940s. Recreation venues also received attention, with the construction of Memorial Park in 1947, including a pool, football, tennis, and conference rooms.<sup>229</sup> In 1955, Nacogdoches voters approved a \$600,000 bond package to provide for the building of a new courthouse and jail. The 1911 courthouse was demolished to make way for the new complex and during construction a series of errors occurred that caused the old courthouse's wall to collapse on top of part of the new building. (FIG. 22). It took quite some time for the repairs to be made and the complex, the fifth courthouse in county history, was completed in 1958 and fully occupied in 1960.<sup>230</sup> J.N. McCammon was the architect, and the building has been described by some as modern or "early motel style."<sup>231</sup>

A great deal of building activity occurred in the 1960s, not the least of which was the completion of the new Mize Department Store on Hospital in 1961 (Property #89). In that same year, the "city's old hitching lot" became the Farmer's market, and thirteen brick and steel retails stalls were installed along banks of Banita Creek at West Main.<sup>232</sup>

Perhaps the greatest change to the fabric of downtown Nacogdoches was the construction of two new banking facilities. Two historic buildings, home to banking houses for over half a century, were replaced between 1965 and 1972. The Stone

<sup>225</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 203.

<sup>226</sup> "Another Neon Sign for Downtown Area," *Daily Sentinel* 9 August 1947.

<sup>227</sup> "Public to View Remodeled Hotel," *Daily Sentinel*, 26 September 1947, 1.

<sup>228</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 189.

<sup>229</sup> "Memorial Project Near Completion," *Daily Sentinel*, 3 October 1947, 1.

<sup>230</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 190.

<sup>231</sup> Kelsey, Mavis P. and Donald Dyal, *The Courthouses of Texas*, 1993:204.

<sup>232</sup> Patin, *Nacogdoches*, 210.

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

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 55

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

---

Fort National Bank, for example, extended its facilities on the southeast corner of the square to Pilar Street in 1956, retaining the corner building until it was demolished and replaced in 1965 (Property #7). The Commercial National Bank abandoned its historic location for new quarters, demolishing a large portion of the 200 block along Main Street, including the EA Blount Building, to make way for their new home in 1972 (Property #6).

Despite a gradual decline in population between 1940 and 1950 (as the war effort attracted families elsewhere or military duty called), Nacogdoches rebounded dramatically beginning in 1947. Concerted efforts on the part of the local government and citizen groups spurred economic growth, and encouraged building improvements in the commercial center. While Nacogdoches had always been the economic hub and governmental center of the county, its shift away from agriculture and timber in the 1930s encouraged a diversification that renewed its prosperity. From the mid-1950s, particularly after the installation of Ralph W. Steen as President in 1958, Stephen F. Austin State University proved a valuable asset to the community, and to this day contributes a great deal to the local economy. After 1960, Nacogdoches had permanently shifted away from an agricultural economy, and relied less on its educational institutions and industrial and medical facilities began to dominate.

## **Summary**

The Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District represents the core of commercial activity and economic development in Nacogdoches since the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The initial platting of the town site in 1779, the subsequent development of the first business houses, and the completion of the first rail line in 1883 were decisive events in the town's initial development. The Houston, East & West Texas Railroad (HE & WT) immediately transformed Nacogdoches into a regional trade center and shipping point; the arrival of the Texas & New Orleans line (an affiliate of the Southern Pacific) in 1902 and the Nacogdoches & Southeastern in 1905 solidified the town's stature as an important transportation hub that linked the economies of the town and outlying rural areas. Nacogdoches not only became a center for processing and transportation of cotton and lumber in Nacogdoches County, but hosted numerous commercial endeavors including banking houses, retail establishments, small scale industry, manufacturing facilities, and educational institutions. The Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District played a significant and varied role as a commercial and economic center of the region, as well as the seat of county government, and is therefore eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under a number of Criteria. The Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District is eligible for listing under Criterion A at the state level of significance in the area of Commerce for its role in cotton production and distribution in the county, a center of East Texas Lumber industry, and as a host to numerous influential wholesale, retail and industrial establishments. The district is also eligible for listing under Criterion C at the state level of significance in the area of Architecture as an intact sampling of late 19th and 20th century commercial buildings that are reflective of local and national architectural trends during the period of significance (1835-1957).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 56

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

## Representative Properties



### **United States Post Office and Federal Building (1917-1918)**

200 E. Main

Property #1

Central Block with Wings

Contributing

National Register (1992)

Photo #1

Designed by the United States Treasury Department architect James Wetmore, this building was completed in 1917 to house the Nacogdoches United States Post Office and Federal Building.<sup>233</sup> Since its official opening in February 1918, this building has served as a backbone of civic activity, a function which continued during its life as a public library,

through its current function as the Nacogdoches Visitor's Center. This property not only represents one of the few local examples of Classical Revival architecture, reflecting a nationwide trend in the design of government buildings, but signals the presence of the federal government in Nacogdoches beginning in 1914 (at the encouragement of local citizen groups).

The United States Post Office and Federal Building is a 1-story building, executed in red brick with a cast sandstone base and entablature. The building is composed as a central block with wings, with a modified rectangular plan. The primary façade faces onto Main Street, symmetrically arranged to read as a three-part composition with a slightly inset central bay flanked by subordinate wings on the east and west. The center bay contains three minor divisions, consisting of central entry way flanked by two symmetrical Paladianesque filled arches. The entrance doorway, set within the center division of the central bay, features a multi-light wood frame door with side lights and a triple transom window. The arches above the central doorway and each of the flanking windows compositionally recall fanlight windows, but are filled with cast stone relief in varying patterns. Each of the subordinate wings contain one multi-light sash window, accented by a limestone panel set just above the opening. The property exhibits typical if simplified Classical Revival details that include inset panels, roundels, and a corbelled cornice. A two-story addition to the south façade was executed in the same materials and form language as the original portion of the building. With the exception of this addition, and many interior renovations, the building remains virtually intact.

<sup>233</sup> *Daily Sentinel* 14 May 1999. ETRC Clippings File.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 57

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Erected at perhaps the most prominent location within the downtown district, the former United States Post Office and Federal Building occupies the previously vacant *plaza principal* at the juncture of Main, Fredonia, Pilar, and Pecan Streets. Citizens of Nacogdoches had been lobbying for the construction of a federal building since 1905, but it took nearly a decade for their efforts to come to fruition. Though many had opposed building in the square in the past, the lure of federal funding overcame ideals that had been in place since perhaps the formation of the town plan in 1779. In April 1914, voters elected to sell the site to the Federal Government, in exchange for \$5,000.<sup>234</sup> The actual purchase of the property was delayed by title disputes and negotiations with the federal government, but the transaction was finalized by August 1915. Letting of the building contract was delayed until 1916, and construction did not commence until January 1917. Graeme McDonald Company of California (with Kenneth McDonald as the foreman) was awarded the contract, and given a completion deadline of only one year.<sup>235</sup> James Wetmore, Acting Supervising Architect for the United States Treasury from 1915 to 1933, provided the design and specifications for the building. He called for a small Classical Revival building of brick and sandstone (with some granite detailing) to be erected at an approximate cost of \$46,000.<sup>236</sup> In February 1917, McDonald arrived in Nacogdoches to begin construction.<sup>237</sup> Rains delayed work further, as did the filling of the old Spanish well in the center of the plaza (with eight feet of concrete), but by April basement was excavated and foundations completed. The federal building, which would also house the post office, was completed on schedule, and opened in February 1918.<sup>238</sup> Though local citizens were not immediately impressed with the façade, they clearly felt that building would serve its function. An editorial from the *Daily Sentinel* in 1918 declared that “while the building is not so imposing in its appearance from the outside as was expected, the interior is...a model of perfection in its appointments and workmanship, designed especially for the convenience of the enterprise that will occupy it.”<sup>239</sup> This building served as the main post office in Nacogdoches until 1964, when a new facility was constructed on West Main Street.<sup>240</sup> The building was sold the City of Nacogdoches in 1973, and served as the public library until 1997 when it became the Tourist Information Center and now, the Visitor’s Center.

The Nacogdoches United States Post Office and Federal Building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (1992) under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a rare and unaltered local example of the Classical Revival. The building also is indicative of community wide development during the early 20th century as argued in the context statement “Community Planning and Development in Nacogdoches: 1830-1940.” The building is also a Register Texas Historic Landmark (1999).

---

<sup>234</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 129.

<sup>235</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 130.

<sup>236</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 130.

<sup>237</sup> *Daily Sentinel* 14 May 1999. ETRC Clippings File.

<sup>238</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 130.

<sup>239</sup> *Daily Sentinel*, 13 February 1918, quoted in Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 130.

<sup>240</sup> Murchison, Bill. *Nacogdoches: Past and Present, A Legacy of Texas Pride*.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 58

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas



Roberts Building (1904)  
216 E. Pilar  
Property #8  
Contributing  
National Register (1992)

Photo #2

Constructed in 1904, the Roberts Building represents an intact example of a modest one-part commercial block. The one-story, red brick building is sited on the south side of the *plaza principal*, on a corner lot that slopes southward toward Banita Creek. The primary entrance on Pilar Street is accessed by a raised sidewalk. The building

features a rectangular plan, with a partial basement beneath the south end of the building. The primary façade faces Pilar Street and the former Post Office, and is divided on the ground floor into three principle bays. Each bay contains a double-door entry with two-light transoms set within a segmental arch. A corbelled cornice separates the lower portion from the parapet area. The parapet repeats the three bay configuration, and is marked by inset panels. There are few decorative details on this building. The east elevation, facing Fredonia Street, has long been painted with murals or advertisements. Historically, this building bore an advertisement for Firestone tires. This elevation of the building allows access to the basement through small wooden doors set in segmental archways. This side also features several wood-sash windows set in segmental arch-top openings. On the ground floor (or store-level), the east elevation features two single double-hung wood sash windows set in segmental arch-topped openings. A small addition above the basement level has been framed in and clad in sheet metal.

As Nacogdoches grew, desirable lots around the *plaza principal* came to be used primarily for commercial purposes. The Roberts building was erected around 1904 by the Roberts family on the former homestead site of John S. Roberts. Roberts, who moved to Nacogdoches in 1820s, was a prominent citizen, a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence, and took part in the Fredonia Rebellion. Although a residence stood on the lot until at least 1900, by about 1904 it had been demolished to make way for this commercial property. The building was leased by the Roberts family to a variety of businesses, including: a grocery store and warehouse (Sanborn 1906); a restaurant (Sanborn 1912); a grocer and plumber (Sanborn 1921); a grocer, cobbler, barber and auto repair shop (Sanborn 1922); a furniture repair shop (Sanborn 1926); and a key shop and the City Café. It was in this coffee shop where local legend says that Bonnie Parker (of “Bonnie and Clyde” fame) worked as a waitress before meeting Clyde Barrow and turning to a life of crime in 1930.<sup>241</sup>

<sup>241</sup> Murchison 81. Bonnie and Clyde, the core of the famed Barrow Gang, were caught, shot and killed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Louisiana in May 1934, after a crime spree that had lasted several years (intermittently from their meeting in 1930) and was reported to include 13 murders, numerous bank and store robberies, kidnappings, and a prison break. The FBI received a break in the Bonnie and Clyde case when they discovered two stolen Fords abandoned in Michigan and Oklahoma. A search of the car in Oklahoma yielded a drug prescription which had been filled for Clyde Barrow by his aunt in Nacogdoches. See “FBI Famous Cases” <http://www.fbi.gov/libref/historic/famcases/clyde/clyde.html>. Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow were both raised near Dallas.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 59

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Currently the location of The General Mercantile and Old Time String Shop, the building won a beautification award in 1979 for restoration efforts completed by owner Steve Hartz.<sup>242</sup> The Roberts Building, as one of the “least altered historic buildings fronting on the old Principal Square” is listed on the National Register (1992) under Criterion C as a noteworthy example of early twentieth-century commercial architecture.



## Ingraham Building (1897)

210 E. Pilar Street

Property #10

Two-part Commercial

Contributing

Registered Texas Historic Landmark (1998); Nacogdoches Historic Landmark

Photo #3

The Ingraham Building at 210 East Pilar Street represents an intact local example of late nineteenth-century commercial architecture with simplified Victorian details. It is the only building within the district to retain its double-height gallery (and only four other buildings have a balcony off the second floor), a feature not uncommon in Nacogdoches and commercial districts

across the state during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Constructed of brick, this two-story building is characterized by its simple composition and prominent double-height gallery. The primary façade faces onto Pilar Street and the *plaza principal*, and is divided into two bays. The ground floor is asymmetrically arranged to accommodate separate doorway to upper floor. Storefront consists of double-door entry flanked by plate glass window and surmounted by a three part transom. The second floor, which housed Ingraham's professional offices, displays a symmetrical placement of fenestration. These consist of three evenly spaced wood sash windows and one doorway of similar design, all surmounted by segmented arch fill and brickwork. Architectural details were minimal, limited to corbelled brickwork at the cornice line, and corner brackets and turned wood posts on the upper gallery, and a carved sun or flower motif on the transom woodwork. The restoration project, completed in 1997, replaced the original storefront that had been removed in 1922. Other restored features include: original windows; rough-hewn interior roof supports; square nails in the ceiling; and original doors on second floor interior.

The Ingraham Building was commissioned by George Francis Ingraham, a local attorney, judge and civic leader. Ingraham was born in New York in 1842, and was raised in Alazan (seven miles west of Nacogdoches). His family had settled in Nacogdoches by 1860. After his return from service as a Confederate soldier in the Civil War, he married Martha Thompson Cooper (in 1866), and had nine children.<sup>243</sup> Ingraham became attorney in 1873, and also served as the

<sup>242</sup> “Old Time String Shop wins C.C. beautification award,” *Daily Sentinel* 2/4/79

<sup>243</sup> The Ingraham's children were: Francis Lafayette, George Cornelius, Eva Alma (m. Smith), Fritz Hoya, Elcee Rosina (m. Tucker), Martha P. (m. Staber), Payton S. Wilton Porter (m. Willie Blount Ingraham), and Jessie N. see <http://libweb.sfasu.edu/ETRC/COLLECT/manscrpt/PERSONAL/Ingraham>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 60

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Nacogdoches county treasurer, a county judge, and a Texas State Representative. He also served as the executive vice president of the Farmers and Merchants State Bank (Founded 1908) from 1910 until its merger with Stone Fort National Bank in 1919.<sup>244</sup>

In 1896, he acquired the title to the lot on Pilar, which Sanborn maps indicate was between the court house and Bullock House.<sup>245</sup> The two-story brick building was completed in 1897, and the second floor served as Ingraham's law office. The first floor was leased to retail businesses, including G.N. Bright, who ran a grocery and feed store between 1918 and 1937. Upon Ingraham's death in 1920, ownership of the building was divided between his nine children.<sup>246</sup> F.J. Tucker, one of Ingraham's grandsons, purchased the property from his family members. He, like his grandfather was an attorney and civic leader, and used second floor of the building as an office for his law practice. Sally Tucker Thompson inherited the building upon his death, and leased it to number of retail establishments. In 1996, Charles R. Bright (the son of G.N. Bright) purchased the building and restored it to its original appearance, including the replacement of the storefront that had been removed in 1922.

Believed to be the oldest intact building on the south side of the public square, the Ingraham building is a Registered Texas Historic Landmark (1998), and a Nacogdoches Historic Landmark.

## Cox Building / Tausig Tobacco Company (1909)

West side, North Pecan Street

Property #31

Two-part Commercial (Industrial / Warehouse)

Contributing

Photo #4 to #6



The Cox Building on the west side of North Pecan Street was constructed by John Cox for William Tausig and the Tausig Tobacco Company in 1909. Constructed of red brick, this building not only represents an intact example of modest industrial and warehouse construction, but demonstrates the viability of the small yet promising tobacco

industry present in Nacogdoches between 1897 and approximately 1914.

This two-story red brick building exhibits a façade that is roughly symmetrical, divided into three bays. The central bay is much wider than the outer two, and contains all entrances and fenestration on both the ground and upper levels. All vertical bays are slightly inset, delineated by pilasters that extend from the ground floor upward to just below the cornice

<sup>244</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 116.

<sup>245</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1891.

<sup>246</sup> <http://libweb.sfasu.edu/ETRC/COLLECT/manscript/PERSONAL/Ingraham/Ing3main.htm#inventory>



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 61

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

line. Decorative details are limited to brick dentils attached beneath the cornice and at the parapet. The ground floor is composed of two large industrial-sized openings, now framed in allowing access to the interior by two sets of man-doors. The ground and upper floors are separated by a full-façade balcony that is shared with the neighboring Cox Building built in 1888 (Property #30). The balcony is accessed on the upper floor by a single door positioned on the south end of the faced. Only one window is positioned on the upper floor, and is a 6/6 wood sash in a segmental arch-top frame (to match the doorway on the same level). The north elevation is characterized by its regular fenestration pattern, with nine single wood sash windows on the ground floor level, and five single wood-sash windows piercing the elevation at the upper level. The building, industrial in nature, is characterized by its modest detailing and functional character. Original construction specifications called for a steam heating system, and external and interior hand-operated elevators, still visible and still in working order on the south elevation.



The first cigar company in Nacogdoches was established in 1897 by H.S. Edler.<sup>247</sup> Edler's endeavor was housed in a two or three story frame building on North Fredonia, between Hospital and Commerce streets (no longer extant). By 1906, a cigar company was operation at 106 N. Church Street, likely the home of Nacogdoches Cigar Company. Founded in about 1905 by Louis de Mouche (a famed cigar maker from Belgium who had also overseen operations in Fort Worth and Victoria), Dr. J.E. Mayfield, and Wilton Ratcliff, the Nacogdoches Cigar Company was reported to produce 50,000 "high grade cigars" every month.<sup>248</sup> Their brands included Senate Chamber, Challenge, Dictator, Morse-all-Texas, Red Field, Little Jap, and Old Stone Fort. Tobacco for many of these lines, including the Red Field, was grown and processed in Redfield, about 4 miles north of Nacogdoches on North Street (Highway 59), and produced in the Nacogdoches Factory #216. The Redfield area and the nearby tobacco fields were accessed by a spur of the Houston, East and West Texas Railroad. Harry F. Wilson, one of the original shareholders of the Nacogdoches Cigar Company, later founded his own company and began producing Bonita cigars, which may have been manufactured just one-half block south of the Tausig Company, on the second floor of the Wettermark Bank



Building at Main and South Pecan (Property #19). By 1909, William Tausig of Tausig Cigar Company (originally from Chicago) had started to make

<sup>247</sup> For more on the tobacco industry in Nacogdoches, see "The Cigar Companies of Nacogdoches" in the Old Town Printing Press, August 1995.

<sup>248</sup> See "Nacogdoches Cigar Co." in the *Daily Sentinel* 1906, clipping ETRC vertical files; also "The Cigar Companies of Nacogdoches" in the Old Town Printing Press, August 1995.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 62

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Spanish Maid Cigars out of the Cox Building / Tausig Factory on North Pecan. This business was in operation until at least 1914, and the building was used as a cigar factory and for tobacco storage.

After tobacco industry folded, the tobacco factory building was re-purposed, but changed very little. In 1921, Tucker-Sitton Hardware used the building as a warehouse. By 1928, the building was leased to Branch-Patton Hardware. For the next sixty years, still in the possession of the Cox family, the facility was used as a warehouse. In 1988, the building was purchased by Robert Gruebel. The Cox Building also served as Nacogdoches's first John Deere Dealership, a place for buggies, plows, building supplies, ambulance garage and caskets.



## **Mahdeen (Blount-Baker) / Wyatt Building (1918)**

204 E. Pilar Street

Property #11

Two-part commercial block

Contributing

Photo #7

The Mahdeen-Wyatt Building at 204 East Pilar Street was designed by Dietrich Rulfs in 1918. Constructed of locally-made brick on the original site of the Nacogdoches County Courthouse (demolished 1916), this building not only represents an outstanding example of Rulfs' architectural skill but also the ambitions of local businessmen who operated the enormously successful Mahdeen Company. Mahdeen was recognized in 1945 as an "industry which has built the city of Nacogdoches and added to its financial wealth and prestige."<sup>249</sup>

This three-story building is constructed of brown brick, made locally on banks of Banita Creek. The symmetrical façade is divided into three bays; the central bay is slightly wider than the outer two, and features a stepped parapet. The vertical bays are delineated by pilasters, which extend from the second floor upward to the parapet. This building is given horizontal accent by a band of buff-colored stone (or concrete) that externally demarcates the interior floor division. These bands are broken at each pilaster, but otherwise run the length of the bay. Decorative details are limited to triangulated, corbelled brickwork beneath the banks of windows, the same brickwork at the parapet, and a single decorative medallion adorning the cornice. The ground floor storefront is composed of an off-set double entry, flanked by plate-glass display windows framed in aluminum. The upper windows are equally sized, 1/1 wood sash. In the east and west bays, fenestration patterns are symmetrical, with three evenly-spaced sash windows per bay. The pattern of the central bay is slightly different, consisting of a paired sash window flanked by single windows (For a pattern of 1/2/1). The composition of this building is simple and straightforward, contributing to its sense

<sup>249</sup> "The Mahdeen Co.", pamphlet ca June 1945, published by Commercial National Bank. Vertical files, ETRC, Steen Library. No. 10 in the series.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 63

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

of mass and repose. Original, intact interior details include: woodwork; doors; office cabinets; large oak vats in which Mahdeen tonic was mixed on the third floor (which has high ceilings to accommodate the machinery); and a ramp that was used to transport automobiles from the first to the second floor.

The Mahdeen Company, which operated from 1912 to 1985, originated from John Lewis Needham's bathtub. Needham, a local barber, had developed a hair tonic and dandruff remedy for use his shop at corner of Main and Pecan (the later home of Pool Pharmacy). Around 1907, he began to mix and bottle the liquid from his home, with the intention of selling the concoction throughout East Texas and Louisiana.<sup>250</sup> Soon after, he met Frank Aikman, a traveling salesman out of New York who sold Dodson's Livertone.<sup>251</sup> Aikman was often in Nacogdoches and the surrounding region (he stayed at the Redland Hotel) for sales calls, and upon learning of Needham's formula quickly recognized the potential for its sale. Aikman and Needham formed a partnership, and founded the Mahdeen Company (Needham spelled backwards) on 12 September 1912. By January 1913, with Aikman supplying funding for expansion, they were in business. When Needham died in 1918,<sup>252</sup> Aikman acquired control of the company. Shortly thereafter, he took up residence in a new brick building designed by Rulfs on the south side of the square. The building had been commissioned by Eugene H. Blount and Thomas E. Baker, and though Mahdeen was the tenant for years, it was known as the Blount-Baker Building into early 1900s.

The Mahdeen Company occupied the basement and the third floor, which housed the vats for mixing and bottling the tonic. The first and second floor of this building were used by auto dealerships such as Duke H. Herbert Ford Co, and Ben T. Wilson Chevrolet. In its new facility, the company was quite successful, earning over a million dollars in this era. Mahdeen's profits allowed Aikman to make various philanthropic gifts to city of Nacogdoches:<sup>253</sup> he contributed a great deal of funding for the construction of the Westminster Presbyterian Church on North Street; and in 1924 donated \$12,000 for the erection of the Aikman Gymnasium on the Stephen F. Austin College campus.<sup>254</sup> Aikman died in 1939, and the Mize Brothers (with partners E.C. Best and R.G. Muckleroy, Sr.) acquired Mahdeen in late 1939 or early January 1940. Muckleroy was bought out in 1941, leaving Mahdeen in the hands of the Mize partnership. World War II threatened materials and supplies – Mahdeen's secret recipe included several ingredients imported from Europe – but the company continued to grow. Shortly after the acquisition, the Mize Brothers and Best introduced a new product, the Mahdeen Shampoo, which outsold the tonic. After 1940, Mahdeen products were distributed nationwide to wholesale establishments and to the armed forces overseas. It never had an extensive marketing campaign, but still sold rather well, particularly in California and to the United States Army and Navy.<sup>255</sup> The packaging remained remarkable consistent over the long life of the tonic and shampoo; the bottle changed only once, and the label was slightly altered due to legal complications stemming from Aikman's use of an unauthorized photo of the daughter of an original employee. Because the images was used without a release, the label was modified to show a generic drawing of a woman).<sup>256</sup> In October 1965, the *Daily Sentinel* announced that the "city's oldest industry" was sold to Owen Laboratories and would be moved to Dallas. EC Best, the partner in Mize Department store, remarked that he and Mize were "getting old," and received a

<sup>250</sup> "City's oldest industry sold" DS 21 Oct 1965. The date of his first bathtub mixture was given by his daughter, who reported helping him stir the tonic in the bathtub.

<sup>251</sup> "City's oldest industry sold" DS 21 Oct 1965.

<sup>252</sup> The DS article puts this date at 1917. "City's oldest industry sold" DS 21 Oct 1965.

<sup>253</sup> "The Mahdeen Co.", pamphlet ca June 1945, published by Commercial National Bank. Vertical files, ETRC, Steen Library. No. 10 in the series.

<sup>254</sup> Partin, Nacogdoches, 150. Aikman Gym was in use until 1961, when the Shelton Gym on Raguet Street replaced it.

<sup>255</sup> "City's oldest industry sold" DS 21 Oct 1965.

<sup>256</sup> "City's oldest industry sold" DS 21 Oct 1965.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 64

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

lucrative offer from Owen. The building on Pilar Street was vacated, making way for the Village Furniture Store of Lufkin in the 1960s. In 1971, John S. Wyatt purchased the property from the Baker and Blount heirs to house Wyatt's Office City. The building is currently home to Story-Wright Office Supply.



## Maria Davidson Apartments (1928 )

214 S. Fredonia

Property #96

Domestic

Contributing

Photo #8 and #9

The Maria A. Davidson Apartments, designed by Dietrich Rulfs in 1928, is the only historic apartment building in Nacogdoches originally constructed for the purpose that it retains today.<sup>257</sup> It also represents an intact example of a simplified Mission or Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style, which despite the Spanish heritage of Nacogdoches, is rarely seen in the extant building stock.



The Apartments are located one block south of the *plaza principal*, and face east onto South Fredonia Street. The facility occupies two lots that slope south toward Banita Creek. This is a 2-story, red brick building with an U-shaped plan. Designed by Dietrich Rulfs in 1928, this building stylistically recalls Mission Revival and Spanish Colonial Revivals popular in the United States in the from about 1890 into the 1920s. While this is a simplified version of revival style, it retains significant identifying features such as a red tile-clad hipped (or pent) roof cantilevered from the wall surface, and a roofline broken by a protruding Alamo parapet.

The primary façade of the apartment building faces east onto South Fredonia Street, with a secondary entrance through the courtyard on the south elevation. The east façade is composed of three bays. The central bay is slightly recessed, and the parapet above this bay projects beyond the roofline. The primary entry is positioned within this central bay, and is accessed by set of steps that culminate in small stoop, and

<sup>257</sup> Note that one survey on file with the Texas Historical Commission indicates the construction date of the building is 1910; however, it did not appear on Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps until 1929.



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

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 65

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

---

the side rails have cast-stone coping. The double door entry is positioned at the top of the stairs, and is articulated by a brick archway. The door itself is a multi-light wood door, surmounted by a double row of transom windows and a filled arch (which may have been arched transom window, now filled over). The entry arch is flanked on each side by a 1/1 wood sash window, and second floor displays a centered set of paired sash windows (placed directly about the entryway), and flanked on each side by a 1/1 wood sash window. The central bay is flanked by identical and symmetrical wings to the north and south. The ground and second floors of each contain one set of paired 1/1 wood sash windows, with brick sills. The overall façade has little adornment, limited to a double row of soldier bricks that form a string course just below the cornice line. Other ornamental detail is displayed at parapet, in the inset panel displaying building name, and in the decorative brackets under the eaves, very typical of Mission and Spanish Revival styles.

A second entry sequence is located on south elevation of building, which is marked by a small inset courtyard. Here, the building reads as two wings separated by the courtyard, which contains a double-height arcade allowing exterior access to the interior rooms. The arcade is placed at the rear (north end) of the courtyard, and is formed by a string of three connected arches, the center of which is wider and narrower than the outer two arches. All three are supported by square brick piers, embellished with corbelled brickwork at the spring of the arches. The arcade element is capped with an Alamo parapet, similar to the east façade. Like front of the building, the south doorway is reached by ascending a set of steps; here, one must first pass beneath the arcade to reach the entry. Windows on both ground floor and second floor of this elevation show less regularity than on the east facade, with sets of paired sash windows and adjacent smaller single windows that likely view to bathroom facility. Sash windows also overlook the courtyard on both the ground and second floors.

Facilities for car parking include a paved lot to the south of the building (just off the courtyard), a 9-bay carport to the south which is contemporaneous with the apartment building, and a second non-original carport to the south.

John P. Davidson, who had a part in the formation of the First National Bank<sup>258</sup> and commissioned Rulfs to design the Liberty Hotel in 1891 (which he owned until at least 1933) acquired lots on South Fredonia in 1927. Davidson had apparently been aware in statewide trends in apartment building – particularly the creation of smaller buildings consisting of four to twelve units meant to house middle-class occupants – and created his own version for Nacogdoches based on this prevalent model. The building was named for Davidson's wife, Maria. The structure originally housed single women who worked downtown as clerks, telephone operators, and in similar occupations.

The Maria Davidson Apartment building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (1992) under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, and is associated with the context statement "Community Planning and Development in Nacogdoches: 1830-1940."

---

<sup>258</sup> *Daily Sentinel* ca. 1906. Vertical Files, ETFC, Steen Library.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 66

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas



## Old Mize Factory (1938)

412 North Street  
Property #102  
One-Part Commercial  
Contributing  
Photo #10

Erected in 1938 to house Mize Manufacturing, this industrial building served as a factory for women's dresses and suiting, which were sold locally and nationwide by the Mize Brothers. The Old Mize Factory was not only to one of the most successful and long-lived local industries, but represents a rare local example of Streamline Moderne architecture.

This 1 ½ story industrial building is characterized by its horizontal disposition, simple brick cladding and stylistic reference to Streamline Moderne. The primary façade faces west onto North Street, and is divided into three bays. The central bay projects both upward and forward from the elevation plane, and is flanked by two symmetrical bays. The flanking bays each contain two horizontal bands of four windows, each separated by vertical brick pilasters. Windows are multi-light metal casement, though glass block is also used on the north and south elevations. The public entrance to this building is on the West façade. This small double-door flanked on each side by a single window is located in the central bay. The entry is articulated by 4 columns of vertical brick banding, which extends from the parapet downward to the top of the entryway. The entrance is further marked by a simple, horizontal canopy hung on metal rods, a feature that is repeated at entrances placed on the north elevation of the building. The corner bays of building are edged with fluted pattern executed in brick. The water table and cornice areas are likewise ornamented with simple brickwork. The dominant banding pattern is created by alternating three rows of bricks in stringer position and one row in the ender position.

The Old Mize Factory was home to the Mize Manufacturing Company from 1938 to about 1992. The company was founded by Byron H. and W. Allan Mize, originally from Rose Pine, Louisiana. The Mize brothers moved to Nacogdoches in January 1925, after running general merchandise stores in both Huntsville and Crockett. After relocating to Nacogdoches, the brothers opened a variety store at the northwest corner of Main and Church, just west of Opera House.<sup>259</sup> Their variety store did well, and as Lucy McBee reported in the *Daily Sentinel*, gave birth to a women's apparel factory. The venture began in 1927 when Allen Mize had a large quantity of dress ruffle on hand. In order to sell the excess material, Mize designed a dress made wholly of row after row of ruffle; merchants found this design so intriguing

<sup>259</sup> Dempsey, Kristi. Landmarks Celebrate 70 years of business, history this year." *Daily Sentinel* 23 April 1995

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 67

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

that they wanted not the trim, but the whole dress.<sup>260</sup> The success of the garment, first stitched by Emma Watson (who in 1944 was still employed at the factory), encouraged the opening of the first Mize dress factory in 1928 over Golub's Shoe Shop on Church Street.<sup>261</sup> With only three second-hand sewing machines, the employees focused on the manufacture of dress trimmings. Despite the onset of the Depression, the Mize Brothers did well, and in 1930 relocated their business to Elks building and began to manufacture women's dresses. The brothers designed all of the dresses sewn at their factory. Their garments met with almost immediate approval, in both the domestic and foreign markets. In order to stay abreast of recent trends, the Mizes made frequent trips to New York and other markets. Continued success led them to expand again, and to lease the Woodmen of the World Building (WOW, Property #55) in 1931. With a growing business, the brothers, with their partner E.C. Best, were encouraged to hire L.D. Pate as bookkeeper in 1937; Pate, and his daughter after him, would go on to be a partner in the venture. An increase in sales and the need for more floor space for both the Mize Brothers retail store and Mize Manufacturing led to the design and construction of a new facility in 1938. The new factory at 412 North Street contained 300,000 square feet of floor space, and was both heated and air-conditioned. Unlike the tight quarters available in the downtown commercial district, this new plant offered plentiful parking and a "beautifully landscaped," park-like lawn.<sup>262</sup> Using their past experience as tenants turn-of-the-century buildings, the Mizes designed the new factory on one level, with efficient access for delivering raw materials and loading the finished product. The layout of the assembly line complimented a process in which materials entered at one door, fed into a U-shaped line, from which the completed dress would emerge at the opposite end.

Not only did the Mize Brothers business support nearly 100 families during the Depression, but it was considered the "only enterprise which contributes to the welfare of the community by furnishing employment on a considerable scale for women. Thus it affords a livelihood to many families who otherwise would lack the means of self support."<sup>263</sup> By 1944, what began as one ruffled dress had grown to a company of over 200 employees.<sup>264</sup> In a 1943-44 promotional pamphlet titled "Mize Bros. Manufacturing Co., Makers of Ladies Coat Suits, Dresses, and Trimmings," the company was ranked among the local leaders in "industry which has built the city of Nacogdoches and added to its financial wealth."<sup>265</sup>

In an effort to diversify, the Mize brothers and Best purchased the Mahdeen Company in 1941. In 1954, the brothers decided to split their assets, with Allen continuing to operate the Mize Dress Factory, and Byron retaining the department store and the Mahdeen Company (which he maintained until 1965 when he sold it to a drug firm in Dallas).<sup>266</sup> Pate continued to work as the manager of the newly-named Mize Department Store, later becoming full partner. Jack Matthews was hired during this time, and was instrumental in later developments within the retail division. The department store eventually moved to the corner of Church and Main, and remained there until 1961, when the business relocated to its newly designed "modern" facility (and its present location) on Hospital Street.

<sup>260</sup> Lucy McBeem "Now Thriving Industry Started with a Ruffle," *Daily Sentinel* 3 June 1959

<sup>261</sup> This building was later home to JJ Syndicutt's.

<sup>262</sup> Mize Bros. Manufacturing Co., Makers of Ladies Coat Suits, Dresses, and Trimmings. Pamphlet, 1943 or early 1944. Vertical Files, ETRC, Steen Library.

<sup>263</sup> Mize Bros. Manufacturing Co., Makers of Ladies Coat Suits, Dresses, and Trimmings. Pamphlet, 1943 or early 1944. Vertical Files, ETRC, Steen Library.

<sup>264</sup> Lucy McBeem "Now Thriving Industry Started with a Ruffle," *Daily Sentinel* 3 June 1959

<sup>265</sup> Lucy McBeem "Now Thriving Industry Started with a Ruffle," *Daily Sentinel* 3 June 1959

<sup>266</sup> Mahdeen Article, Old Town Printing Press, Nov 1995

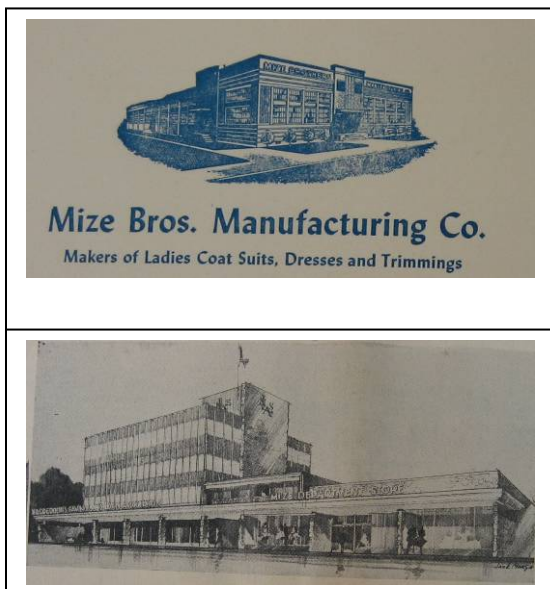
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 68

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

The Mizes were known for their involvement in the community – they were active in both religious and civic affairs – and their commitment to customer service. They offered extensive training to their employees, and often retained them for long periods of time. The Mize Factory was in operation until the 1980s; after the company closed, the factory building remained empty until the Social Security Administration took up residence in 1994.<sup>267</sup>



<sup>267</sup> McDonald 99.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 69

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas



## Hotel Fredonia (1954-55)

200 N. Fredonia

Property #83

Two-Part / International Style

Contributing

Photo #11 and #12

Architect: J. N. McCammon

Builder: W. S. Bellows Construction Company

Interior Design: Titcher-Goettinger (Dallas)

Original Furniture: Phoenix Chair Company  
(Sheboygan, Wis.)

Formal opening: April 1, 1955

Oak Terrace Addition: 1960, McCammon

The six-story Hotel Fredonia is characterized by its slab-like tower surrounded by a one-story semi-circular wing that houses cabana suites, and wraps around an interior courtyard and swimming pool. Later additions include a 30-unit two-story Oak Terrace addition to the northeast end of the property, and one to one-and-a-half story conference facility to the rear of the main hotel complex. The primary façade of the original hotel diagonally faces southeast onto Hospital Street. The ground floor is clad in brick, and is marked

by a porte-cochere. It is surmounted by five floors, each comprised of horizontal ribbon windows divided vertically into eight asymmetrically arranged bays. This southeast façade, and each unit within the overall composition, is framed with elaborate green-tinged ironwork, often described as “New Orleans style.” With the exception of large expanses of glass and ironwork details, the exterior is clad in red brick, left unpainted and generally unadorned. The primary entrance on the ground level is indicated by the porte-cochere which shelters the entry to the main lobby; other entrances penetrate the semicircular one-story wing, and these lead to the interior courtyard. The Oak Terrace is accessed from the northeast side of the property, off of Church Street. Despite its smaller scale and “motel” configuration, materials and details mirror that of the original building. The conference facility toward the north end of the property is a windowless monolith clad in red brick, and although large, has been skillfully tucked behind the hotel tower and does not visually compete. This hotel remains the tallest building in the downtown district.

The Hotel Fredonia not only represents the success of a community-supported economic development effort, but is a rare local example of a modified and small-scale International Style building. The main tower, slab-like in its massing, recalls work by many notable world-renowned modernists architects in this same period, such as the United Nations Secretariat Building in New York (1952).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection 8 Page 70Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

The Hotel Fredonia was constructed in 1954-55 at 200 North Fredonia, between Hospital and Arnold Streets. Built on the site of the former First Christian Church, a rooming house and several private residences, The Hotel Fredonia was positioned at the north end of the commercial district, directly across from the passenger bus depot. The hotel vied for tenants with nearby hotels such as the Liberty (on the plaza principal). The name for this impressive six-story, one-hundred room hotel was taken from the Fredonia Rebellion of 1826 in which Haden Edwards and a group of settlers declared Nacogdoches independent from Mexico. Although the insurgency failed, it represented the vast ambitions of the small town and the character of its citizens, as the hotel was meant to do a century later.

Since the late 1940s, Nacogdoches boosters had been investigating the possibility of building a community-owned hotel and conference center as a draw for regional tourism and business meetings.<sup>268</sup> The local Chamber of Commerce had long believed that the town was losing thousands of dollars per year in potential tourist income, and blamed the lack of accommodations in the region that could service both leisure travelers and pass-through business travelers. In 1952, the need for improved guest facilities in the area had become clear. In an effort to boost the economy while simultaneously adding prestige to the city,<sup>269</sup> a group of businessmen formed the New Hotel Campaign for Nacogdoches, later re-named the Nacogdoches Community Hotel Corporation. Led by Jack McKinney (McKinney Drilling Company), J. Elbert Reese, and R.G. Muckleroy, they began to sell stock to citizens in order to finance the project. They employed Hockenbury System, Inc., from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, who were specialists in hotel fund-raising. This group survey the need for a hotel, and recommended a fund-raising campaign that would included the sale of stock was sold in units of \$100, "consisting of one share of common stock valued at \$50 and one \$50 bond yielding 4 per cent interest yearly."<sup>270</sup> The Hockenbury company believed that "big investors" would contribute the vast majority of the funding, but in the end, it was the "little men" of Nacogdoches who made over half of the stock purchases in \$100 units.<sup>271</sup> Approximately 1100 local businessmen invested,<sup>272</sup> including figures such as Carl Monk who was also on the executive committee, with one individual contribution equaling \$10,000.<sup>273</sup>



<sup>268</sup> "Mize Heads Hotel Committee," *Daily Sentinel*, 3 September 1947, 1; "Plan for Hotel Is Studied," *Daily Sentinel*, 28 August 1947, 1. "Community Hotel Idea Is Dimmed," *Daily Sentinel*, 16 September 1947, 1.

<sup>269</sup> Sigman Byrd, "New Hotel Will Add Prestige to City, Famed Writer Says," *Daily Sentinel* January 12, 1955.

<sup>270</sup> Charlotte Burrows, "Swank Nacogdoches Hotel Financed by Townspeople," *Shreveport Times* October 1959, reprinted in *Daily Sentinel* 19 October 1959.

<sup>271</sup> Charlotte Burrows, "Swank Nacogdoches Hotel Financed by Townspeople," *Shreveport Times* October 1959, reprinted in *Daily Sentinel* 19 October 1959.

<sup>272</sup> *Houston Chronicle* Mar 29, 1955

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 71

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

The total amount set aside for the construction of the hotel was \$500,000.<sup>274</sup> Land was acquired along Hospital Street between Fredonia and Mound, and plans were quickly developed. After a number of older buildings were demolished to make way for the new facility, the groundbreaking was held in 1954. Dallas architect J. N. McCammon – who later designed the Nacogdoches County Courthouse -- was commissioned as the principal architect. The interiors were designed by Titcher-Goettinger of Dallas,<sup>275</sup> and murals were painted by the local artist Janet Turner.<sup>276</sup> As with the architect and the interior design firm, a great deal of other design talent was recruited from Dallas: the swimming pool was designed by Paddock, and the kitchen equipped by Juey & Philip, also of Dallas.<sup>277</sup> Tile for bathrooms, however, were imported from France.<sup>278</sup> W.S. Bellows Construction Company of Houston, led by Frank Bellow, constructed the six-story building of reinforced concrete and brick cladding, accented with “New Orleans” cast iron grillwork across the plate glass façade of the tower slab. The Hotel Fredonia was designed as a “modern contemporary-styled hotel building,”<sup>279</sup> entirely air-conditioned, and featured 100 rooms, conference facilities for 600, a patio and a kidney-shaped heated pool surround by semi-circle of cabana suites. With a coffee shop and guest parking for 100, the hotel covered an entire city block.

The Fredonia opened with much fanfare on 1 April 1955. An estimated 6,000 people attended the grand opening, and press coverage of the event extended as far as both Dallas and Houston.<sup>280</sup> The new building was held in high regard, both by its investors and the general public. Not only did it appear “as modern as an atomic submarine,”<sup>281</sup> but was viewed as “a hotel that would add prestige to any city in the world. To old Nacogdoches, standing waist deep in the glorious history of Texas, this great patio circled by smart-looking cabanas, is almost, yet not quite, incredible. It’s a little like having the Taj Mahal moved, stone by stone, from Agra to Lufkin.”<sup>282</sup> Though the brick building was clearly viewed as both modern and functional – with clear reference to contemporary nationwide trends such as the International Style, yet McCammon added “enough traditional architecture in it to give the hotel a southern flavor and atmosphere along with its distinctive modern touch.”<sup>283</sup>

For over a decade, between 1955 and 1967, The Hotel Fredonia was believed to be the most successful community-owned hotel in the nation.<sup>284</sup> In its first year alone, twenty-six conventions were scheduled.<sup>285</sup> The achievement was recognized by Senate Resolution 212, sponsored by Senator Ottis E. Lock of Lufkin, which commended the citizens of Nacogdoches for uniting to build such a “fine” community hotel.<sup>286</sup> By 1959, the hotel employed 92 people,<sup>287</sup> and operated at 95.6%

<sup>273</sup> *Texas Hotel Review*, June 1955: 18. A 1959 article puts the largest single investment at \$13,000 rather than \$10,000. see Charlotte Burrows, “Swank Nacogdoches Hotel Financed by Townspeople,” *Shreveport Times* October 1959, reprinted in *Daily Sentinel* 19 October 1959.

<sup>274</sup> “A Big Night for all at Hotel Victory Dinner.” *Daily Sentinel*, Dec 9, 1952

<sup>275</sup> *Texas Hotel Review*, June 1955: 18.

<sup>276</sup> Sigman Byrd, “New Hotel Will Add Prestige to City, Famed Writer Says,” *Daily Sentinel* January 12, 1955.

<sup>277</sup> “Nacogdoches Opens Luxurious New Hotel,” *Dallas Morning News*, Apr 2 1955

<sup>278</sup> “Nacogdoches Opens Luxurious New Hotel,” *Dallas Morning News*, Apr 2 1955

<sup>279</sup> *Texas Hotel Review*, June 1955: 18.

<sup>280</sup> “6,000 Attend Hotel Opening,” *Daily Sentinel* Apr 2 1955

<sup>281</sup> “Nacogdoches Opens Luxurious New Hotel,” *Dallas Morning News*, Apr 2 1955

<sup>282</sup> Sigman Byrd, “New Hotel Will Add Prestige to City, Famed Writer Says,” *Daily Sentinel* January 12, 1955.

<sup>283</sup> “Nacogdoches’ Club Style Hotel opened” *Houston Post*, April 2, 1955

<sup>284</sup> *Daily Sentinel* September 5, 1969.

<sup>285</sup> “New Nacogdoches Hotel Will Open Doors Today,” *Houston Post* April 1, 1955

<sup>286</sup> “Senate Resolution Lauds Community on New Hotel,” *Daily Sentinel*, 19 April 1955.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 72

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

occupancy throughout the spring and fall months, with an average yearly income from rooms and food reaching \$5,000,000.<sup>288</sup>

So successful was the venture that they were able to expand, constructing the 30-unit Oak Terrace in 1960.<sup>289</sup> The expansion program was estimated at \$300,000, of which \$50,000 was allocated for purchasing the lot to the north of the original facility. As with the original project, local citizens fronted the money for the real estate, and a bank loan was approved for the new building. In addition to providing new thirty new cabana units in a two-story motel configuration, the plans called for the addition of approximately 5,000 square feet of parking or space for 50 cars. J. N. McCammon of Dallas was again commissioned to design the hotel expansion.<sup>290</sup>



The success of the Fredonia as a community hotel inspired the formation of Community Inns of America, Inc., led by Herbert Wilson, the manager of the Fredonia.<sup>291</sup> The fledgling corporation hoped to provide consulting and planning services to communities nationwide who sought to create the same sort of facility that had been so successful in Nacogdoches. Along with the eight projects and twenty-three potential clients they advised in 1962, one of the most notable products to come of this new corporation was the film strip "The Hotel Fredonia Story," which was filmed in color and shown throughout the United States and Canada to community groups interested in building their own community hotels.<sup>292</sup>

Despite a tremendous first decade, the fortunes of the Fredonia began to decline in 1965, in part due to the influx of hotels both in Nacogdoches and in nearby Lufkin. Though 1963 proved to be a record year,<sup>293</sup> and the hotel produced decent revenue in the following season, occupancy dropped to 88.9% in 1965.<sup>294</sup> By 1968, the hotel faced financial difficulties and possibility of foreclosure with a debt of nearly \$250,000. The Fredonia began looking for a buyer. It was eventually sold to Arthur Temple of Diboll, Texas for \$325,000, "a near total loss" on the initial investment made by the community.<sup>295</sup> Sheraton Hotels purchased the facility in 1970, and it was sold again in 1976.<sup>296</sup> Troubles continued, and the hotel closed its door

<sup>287</sup> "It Takes Real People to Make Hotel 'Click'", *Daily Sentinel* 29 April 1960

<sup>288</sup> Charlotte Burrows, "Swank Nacogdoches Hotel Financed by Townspeople," *Shreveport Times* October 1959, reprinted in *Daily Sentinel* 19 October 1959.

<sup>289</sup> *Daily Sentinel* April 29, 1960

<sup>290</sup> Charlotte Burrows, "Swank Nacogdoches Hotel Financed by Townspeople," *Shreveport Times* October 1959, reprinted in *Daily Sentinel* 19 October 1959.

<sup>291</sup> "New Industry Inspired By Hotel Has Ambitious Plans" *Daily Sentinel* 16 May 1962.

<sup>292</sup> "New Industry Inspired By Hotel Has Ambitious Plans" *Daily Sentinel* 16 May 1962.

<sup>293</sup> "Best Yet ... Another Milestone for Hotel Fredonia" *Daily Sentinel* 12 May 1964

<sup>294</sup> "Hotel Facing Crucial Years" *Daily Sentinel* May 1965

<sup>295</sup> Partin, *Nacogdoches*, 211.

<sup>296</sup> "Signs Ordered...Sheraton Crest Inn New Name for Hotel," *Daily Sentinel* 22 October 1970.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 73

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

---

for four years beginning in 1985. In 1989, the Fredonia Corporation formed with the intent of funding a \$4.2 million renovation, an estimate that was soon to expand to \$7.5 million. Funds were raised by a combination of local stockholders – just as with the original construction project – with additional assistance from the Department of Urban Development Administration Grant program. The newly-remodeled Fredonia reopened in May 1989.

## **Banita Creek Bridge (1938-40)**

Pecan Street and Banita Creek

Property #131

Structure

Contributing

Photo #13 and Photo #14

The Banita Creek Bridge, constructed under the auspices of the Works Projects Administration between 1938 and 1940, is one of several bridges erected to connect the south parts of Nacogdoches to areas north of Banita Creek. Not only does this bridge represent an intact example of small-scale engineering, but represents relief efforts undertaken in Nacogdoches during the final years of the Depression.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 74

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas



## **Hoya Building (1900)**

112 South Pecan Street

Property #13

Two-Part Commercial Block

Contributing

Photo #15 and #16

The Hoya Building at 112 South Pecan Street was designed by Dietrich Rulfs in 1900. Although now extensively altered on its primary façade, this red and buff brick building at one time represented an outstanding example of Rulfs' architectural abilities, and reflected the ambitions of local land surveyor, banker and businessman Charles Hoya.

This two-story brick building serves as an anchor for plaza principal, and from its corner lot, faces onto South Pecan Street. Because of its siting at the corner of the main square, and because of the gentle sloping of South Pecan that begins just to the south of this building, it maintains a rather imposing character. Constructed primarily of buff brick, this building is accented by simple red brick details. The primary façade is divided into two horizontal segments, marked by a simple string course (the original brick feature is retained on the south elevation, but the primary façade has been covered with stucco). The façade is divided into three vertical bays, delineated on the ground floor by a series of cast-iron pilasters, and on the upper floor by the fenestration pattern. The ground floor storefront is framed in cast iron forged in 1900 by Tyler Foundry & Machine, Tyler Texas. Within the cast iron frame lies a three-part wooden façade, consisting of 16-light display windows (4x4) flanking a

central entryway. The primary entrance is wood-frame, 6-light, single door with transoms above. The original configuration, including the flat awning suspended on rods, appears to be intact, although it is doubtful that the original materials have been retained. The 3-part, horizontally disposed transom windows remain intact about the awning. The region above the transoms, comprising the second floor, has been altered extensively. Although the three window fenestration pattern and indications of the edge pilasters and parapet line remain intact, the façade has been covered in a layer of tan stucco. This treatment renders all brick surfaces and detailing invisible. Still, the windows retain their original form of a round-top arched opening flanked by two segmented arch-top windows, the later of which



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection 8 Page 75Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

correspond to the fenestration on the Pilar Street façade. The once-remarkable façade of this building is indicated by the Pilar Street elevation, which retains its original surface treatment and details. Decorative brickwork is skillfully executed in a combination of buff and red brick. Here, a stringcourse (aligned with that on the primary façade) marks the internal dispensation of floors, and a series of pilasters divide the elevation into three bays. At the ground floor level, the surface remains undecorated. A corbelled string course is placed just above this area. The upper level of the building features three distinct bays, of which the center bay is characterized by an arched parapet with roundel. The center bay houses three segmented-arch window openings, visually connected by a stringcourse which runs the length of the façade (interrupted only by the bay-defining pilasters). Corbelled dentils likewise stretch along the façade at cornice line, again, pausing at each pilaster. These run just above series of inset panels (Four in each bay), and just below the parapet cap. The outer bays are identical to one another, each featuring two segmented-arch top windows. All windows on this façade trimmed with a brick hood and are united by the continuous stringcourse that extends from the lower (spring) of the hood. Historic photos indicate that this brick detailing was also present on the primary façade.

Although the Pilar Street elevation reflects the quality of this Rulfs-designed building and the alterations at the second floor on the primary façade impact the character of this building, the surface treatment appears reversible. Many historic photographs as well as the intact Pilar Street elevation would provide ample evidence for any restoration effort.

Commissioned by Charles Hoya in 1900, this building was still under construction in October as the Sanborn Map of that year was completed. The impressive two-story brick building and its one-story contemporary counterpart to the north served as permanent replacements for several wood-frame buildings that had formerly occupied this prominent location on the plaza principal. The lots for this property, the neighbor the north, and the Hoya Land Office to the south (Property #95, NR 1992, RTHL 1974, Nacogdoches City Landmark), had long been in the Hoya family. The patriarch of the family, Joseph T. von der Hoya, came to Nacogdoches with his family and three brothers from Damme, Germany in 1836. Although they lived on farm property south of town, the Hoyas purchased the southwest corner of *plaza principal* sometime just after 1836, as a number of town lots were sold to pay a debt to the Mexican government. Joseph Hoya purchased Adolphus Sterne's home on South Lanana Street in 1866, bringing his young family, including his son Charles (1848-1926), into Nacogdoches at this time. Charles was trained as a land surveyor by Captain A. A. Nelson, who had surveyed this part of east Texas both during the Republic and afterward. The enterprising young Charles – who had since married Frances Meisenheimer in 1887, and built a house around 1888 at 210 S. Lanana Street directly across from the Sterne-Hoya home, soon recognized the county's need to provide protective services for land surveys and ownership documents, as well as finance the purchase of property. To meet these needs, Hoya formed the Hoya Land Office in 1897, charging Houston architect Frank E. Rue to design the first fireproof building in town. Hoya selected this site near the downtown square, not only because his family owned the property, but because it was the heart of the town's commercial activity. Hoya worked as a surveyor for Nacogdoches County from 1897 until his death in 1926. In addition to his survey work and loan services, in 1903 he, along with Jeff Hayter, I. L. Sturdevant, and W. U. Perkins, organized the Stone Fort National Bank. Hoya served as the bank's first president and assumed a prominent role in the town's business circles. In 1900, shortly before the formation of the bank, Hoya commissioned Dietrich Rulfs to replace the one-story wood building at the corner of Pilar and South Pecan with the two more permanent – and fire-proof – brick structures. Rulfs probably designed the two buildings in tandem, and they were likely constructed at nearly the same time. The one-story bldg to the north and the two-story bldg to the south shared many of the same characteristics and materials, including cast-iron store fronts manufactured by Tyler Foundry in 1900 (both marked "Chas. Hoya 1900). Hoya leased the ground floor of the south building to various mercantile firms, sometimes with access to the neighboring building, sometimes independently. Property #13 housed numerous businesses over the years, including the Milam Lodge who leased the second floor until

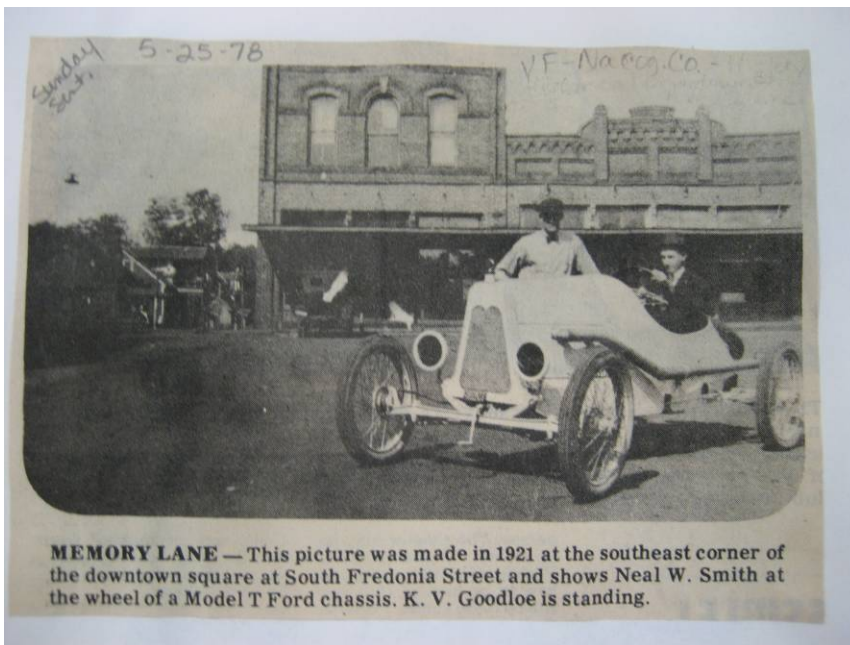
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 76

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

their own building was completed.<sup>297</sup> In 1906, the building to the south housed a store for music, pianos, organs; in 1912 it was home to a grocer, with the Masonic hall on second floor. In 1921, a tin shop was in residence, with Masonic hall remaining on second floor. In 1922, the tin shop branched out to deal in plumbing services and supplies. By 1929, a furniture store (likely Jasper Furniture) had moved in, and from 1947 to 1952, Montgomery Ward was the tenant.<sup>298</sup>



**MEMORY LANE** — This picture was made in 1921 at the southeast corner of the downtown square at South Fredonia Street and shows Neal W. Smith at the wheel of a Model T Ford chassis. K. V. Goodloe is standing.

<sup>297</sup> See Sanborn Maps after 1900.

<sup>298</sup> Nacogdoches City Directories, 1947-1952.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 77

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas



## House of Traditions

312 E. Main

Property #66 and Property #67

One-part Commercial

Non-Contributing

Photo #17

Constructed in 1900, these two neighboring buildings represent a typical example of modest one-part commercial blocks, significantly altered. Both buildings are constructed and clad in brick, though the original surface material and architectural details have been obscured by a man-made stone cladding at the storefront level, and a layer of stucco applied to the area above the transom windows. The storefronts of

both buildings have been modernized, and now feature aluminum-framed plate glass windows and off-set single door entrances. Although the mass and form of both of these buildings are recognizable as historic, the application of non-historic materials and the obliteration of any existing architectural embellishments have rendered these non-contributing elements to the historic district.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 78

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas



## Commercial National Bank (1972)

215 E. Main Street

Property #6

One-part commercial

Non-contributing

Photo #18

In 1901, the Commercial National Bank of Nacogdoches opened at the corner of East Main and Church Streets, in a brick building designed by Dietrich Rulfs. The bank was founded by a diverse group of “out of town” investors, including T. J. Williams of Beaumont, Pete and H. H. Youree of Shreveport, W. B. Chew and James A. Baker of Houston, and R. S. Lovett, the president of the Southern Pacific Railroad.<sup>299</sup> In 1902, a prominent Nacogdoches citizen named Eugene A. Blount purchased the controlling interest from the founders.

Only five years later, following the fire of 1907, Blount relocated the bank into the E.A. Blount Building at 215 East Main. In 1910, the Commercial National Bank re-organized under the State Guaranty System (precursor of the Federal Deposit Insurance Company, 1933), changing its name to Commercial Guaranty State Bank. With F. Hal Tucker as cashier, Blount ran the bank until his death in 1914. He was succeeded as president of the bank by his son, Eugene H. Blount.<sup>300</sup> Later bank presidents included Thomas E. Baker (1928-1945) and Thomas W. Baker (1945). As late as 1951, the Commercial National Bank was still located in the Blount Building, and in fact celebrated their golden anniversary at this location with a open house.<sup>301</sup>

The growth of the bank over time clearly reflected the fortunes of Nacogdoches as a whole.<sup>302</sup> For example, in October 1901, the original amount of deposits totaled \$15,580. In only one year, this amount reached \$104,620. By 1921, the bank held eight times as much money, with 815,630. The Depression had an effect on the deposits, and the bank showed a loss in the 1930s. However, the war effort and subsequent recovered allowed the bank to prosper, reaching almost \$2 million by 1941 (\$1,812,940). As Nacogdoches reached the decade of the 1950s, the bank yet again exponential expansion, and by 1950, deposits totaled \$6,774,005.

<sup>299</sup> Joe E. Ericson, , “Nacogdoches Banks and Bankers,” in *Commemorative History of Nacogdoches*, 192-93.

<sup>300</sup> McDonald, *Nacogdoches*, 87.

<sup>301</sup> Daily Sentinel ca 1951.

<sup>302</sup> *Commercial National Bank, 1901-1951. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Booklet*. Nacogdoches, 1951.

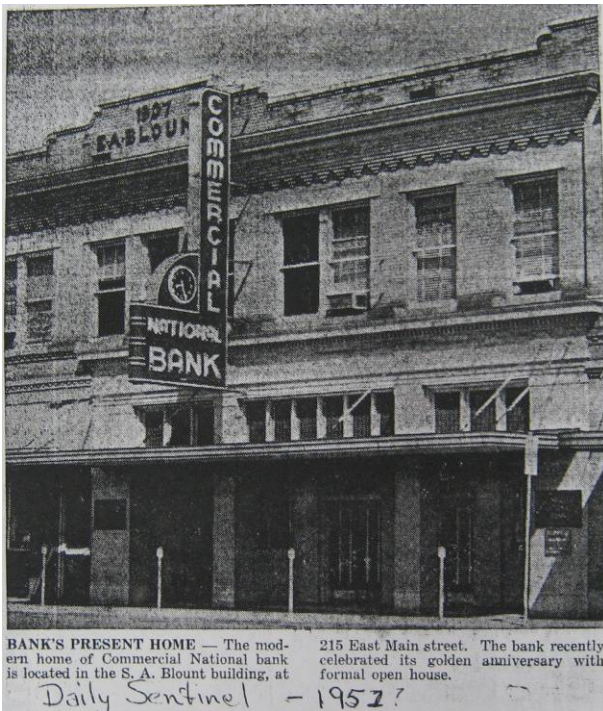
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 79

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

In 1961, after such an intense period of growth, the bank was in dire need of improved facilities. For a short while, it was moved into a temporary home in the Old Herald Building on North Fredonia.<sup>303</sup> Improvements were made to the original building, including the addition of 1,074 feet of floor space to the building lobby (which had originally covered only 884 feet, and was thus expanded to 1,696 feet). In an effort to create a distinctive and luxurious interior, the new building was installed with Swedish green Cippolino marble, walnut paneling, colonial walnut furniture, and heavy piled wool



BANK'S PRESENT HOME — The modern home of Commercial National bank is located in the S. A. Blount building, at 215 East Main street. The bank recently celebrated its golden anniversary with formal open house.

Daily Sentinel - 1952?

carpeting, and antique-brass chandeliers. Other new features included: an increased supply of lock boxes, coupon booths, customer parking, private offices, a coffee bar, and background music by Magnatronics of New York.<sup>304</sup> Part of the new bank building was a crypt, or time capsule, in which various pieces of Nacogdoches history and memorabilia were to be placed for “prosperity.” These took the form of newspaper articles, pictures and recorded radio programs.<sup>305</sup> When the new bank opened in April 1961, it was to great fanfare and large audiences (at least 4,000 people attended the grand opening).<sup>306</sup> The concept behind the 1961 building, decorated by Mrs. Jean Baker and George Keith of Houston, was a return to the “atmosphere of colonial times, when Nacogdoches was a dominant center of culture, education, statesmanship, and leadership in the state. In the architectural style and interior décor, the bank has followed a pattern which fits the atmosphere of the town an (sic) emphasizes the beauty and simple grace which evolved as civilization was carved from the wilderness. The bank has, in effect, taken the Nacogdoches University Building, as the epitome of constructive thinking in the days of Nacogdoches’ great period of growth and used that era for its inspiration.”<sup>307</sup>

In 1971, about one-half of a square block at East Main and North Fredonia was set for demolition to make room for a new banking facility, patio and garden space.<sup>308</sup> The vast expansion effort included the neighboring lots, once the site of the Swift Brothers and Smith Drug Store, and E.C. Bass Department Store.<sup>309</sup> The demolition of the required area was a massive undertaking expected to take five months. The construction of the new bank was one of largest construction projects ever to take place in the downtown area. In 1972, the bank occupied its new building, part of which had been the original site of the Old Stone Fort.<sup>310</sup> After a fire in 1984, the bank further expanded to include the property that had been Stripling’s Drug Store. A “modern” drive-through motor bank was also built at 805 South Street.

<sup>303</sup> DS 24 June 1960.

<sup>304</sup> “Commercial National Bank Opening Sunday,” DS 29 April 1961

<sup>305</sup> “In Crypt at Bank: Nacogdoches Leaves Word for Posterity” DS 3 March 1961

<sup>306</sup> “4,000 Attend Bank Opening,” DS 1 May 1961

<sup>307</sup> “Faith in Our Future,” DS 29 April 1961

<sup>308</sup> DS 8 May 1971.

<sup>309</sup> Vertical Files, Commercial National Bank. ETRC Archives.

<sup>310</sup> Daily Sentinel 27 June 1972



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

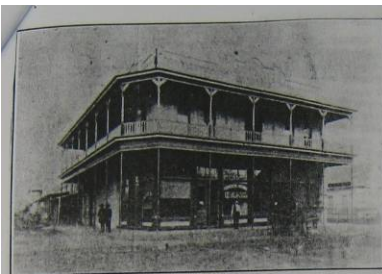
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 80

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

The current building, located on the north side of the *plaza principal*, remains true to the 1971 design. With classical massing and inflections, the Commercial National Bank references the Post Office and Federal building, which is located directly across Main Street. The exterior façade of the bank, faced in red brick, is divided into nine bays. Three of these

bays are marked by expansive arched windows (non-operable), with alternating blank bays. The overall rhythm reads as a-b-aa-b-aa-b-a, with “b” representing a window bay and “a” representing a blank bay. Each bay is demarcated by abstracted, squared, white pilaster. The blank bays are adorned only with a single-course brick ornament suggesting an outline of an arched window with a lantern mounted within. The building is capped by simplified entablature.



1901, 401 E. Main



1907, 215 E. Main



1972, 215 E. Main



Present, 215 E. Main



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 81

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

---

## Selected Bibliography

### *Primary Sources:*

Cemetery records.

Census records.

County District Court records.

Inventory of County Records. Nacogdoches County Courthouse.

Deed records. Nacogdoches County Courthouse.

Family and Personal Papers, Stephen F. Austin State University Library Special Collections.

Mechanic's liens, beginning 1892. Nacogdoches County Courthouse.

Newspapers: *Nacogdoches News-Chronicle*; *Nacogdoches Chronicle*; *The Weekly Sentinel Daily Sentinel*; *Nacogdoches Star News*; *Texas Chronicle*.

Oral history interviews conducted 1990 by Edward A. Galloway.

Photographic Collections. Stephen F. Austin State University Library Special Collections; Stern-Hoya Memorial Library

Plat maps.

Property Deeds. Indexed from 1833. Nacogdoches County Courthouse.

Sanborn Map Company. Fire insurance maps of Nacogdoches, Texas. On file at the Barker Texas History Center, The University of Texas at Austin.

Scrapbooks. Stern-Hoya Memorial Library.

Tax Records. Nacogdoches Appraisal District Office. var. Address files.

University records.

### *Secondary Sources:*

Abernethy, Francis Edward. *The Spanish in East Texas, 1542 to 1838*. Nacogdoches, TX: Historic Nacogdoches, Inc., 1998.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 82

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

---

- Allen, Winnie. "The History of Nacogdoches, 1691-1830." Unpublished Master's thesis. The University of Texas at Austin, 1925.
- Baker, Edward B. "The Bicentennial Commemorative History of Nacogdoches." Nacogdoches Jaycees, 1976.
- Blackburn, Vera. "The Development of Education in Nacogdoches County." Unpublished Master's thesis. The University of Texas at Austin, 1950.
- Blake, Robert Bruce *Historic Nacogdoches*. Nacogdoches: Nacogdoches Historical Society, 1939.
- Blake, R. B. "Locations of the Early Spanish Missions and Presidio in Nacogdoches County," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly Online*, 41 n. 3 (January 1938),  
[http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/publications/journals/shq/online/v041/n3/contrib\\_DIVL4440.html](http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/publications/journals/shq/online/v041/n3/contrib_DIVL4440.html) (Accessed Fri Mar 3 14:00:57 CST 2006)
- Blount, Lois Foster. "The Old Red House: A Leaf from the Reverend George L. Crockett's Sketchbook," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly Online*, 49 n. 4 (April 1946),  
[http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/publications/journals/shq/online/v049/n4/contrib\\_DIVL8677\\_print.html](http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/publications/journals/shq/online/v049/n4/contrib_DIVL8677_print.html) (Accessed Thu Mar 2 11:59:11 CST 2006)
- Brown, Nugent E. *The Book of Nacogdoches County*. Nacogdoches, 1927.
- Buchanan, Barbara. "Cotton Growing in Nacogdoches County." Unpublished Master's thesis. Nacogdoches: Stephen F. Austin State University, 1950.
- Cave, Eber Worthington. *Address on the Subject of Temperance and a Prohibitory Liquor Law, Delivered before Nacogdoches Union Lodge, No. 7, J.O. of G.S. and D.* Nacogdoches, 1855.
- Craddock, Betty Herrington. *The Golden Years*. Waco: Texan Press, 1973.
- Crocket, George Louis. *Two Centuries in East Texas*. Dallas: The Southwest Press, 1932.
- Ericson, Carolyn Reeves. *Fires and Firemen of Nacogdoches, Texas: A History of the Fire Department with a Roster of the Men who Served*. Nacogdoches, 1976.
- Ericson, Carolyn Reeves. *Nacogdoches – Gateway to Texas: A Biographical Directory, 1773-1849*. Ft. Worth, TX: Arrow/Curtis Printing Co., 1974.
- Fain, Lucille. *Heritage: Nacogdoches From Prehistory to Republic*. Waco: Fredonia Press, 1974.
- Haltom, Richard W. *History of Nacogdoches County, Texas*. Austin: Jenkins Publishing, 1880.
- Hardy Heck Moore. "Historic and Architectural Resources of Nacogdoches." 1989.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 83

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

---

- Longstreth, Richard. *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture*. Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1987. Updated 2000 by AltaMira Press.
- Loughery, E. M., Mrs. *A Pen Picture of the City of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County. Their Present and Future. An invitation to Immigration, Capital and Enterprise*. Nacogdoches, Tex.: Spradley & Hutt, Printers, 1895.
- McDonald, Archie, ed. *Hurrah for Texas: The Diary of Adolphus Sterne*. Waco: Texan Press, 1975.
- McDonald, Archie. *Nacogdoches: Wilderness Outpost to Modern City, 1779-1979*. Burnet: Eakin Press, 1979.
- McGraw, Joachim, John W. Clark, Jr., and Elizabeth A. Robbins, eds., *A Texas Legacy: The Old San Antonio Road and the Caminos Reales*. Austin: Texas State Department of Highways and Public Transportation, 1991.
- Maxwell, Robert S. *Whistle in the Piney Woods: Paul Bremond and the Houston, East and West Texas Railway*. Texas Gulf Coast Historical Association, 1963.
- Maxwell, Robert S. and Robert D. Baker. *Sawdust Empire: The Texas Lumber Industry. 1830-1940*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1983.
- Mier y Teran, Manuel de. *Texas by Teran: The Diary Kept by General Manuel de Mier y Teran on His 1828 Inspection of Texas*. Trans. John Wheat. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000.
- Murchison, Bill. *Nacogdoches Past and Present. A Legacy of Texas Pride: A Photographic Documentary*. Odessa: B & C Publishing Company, 1986.
- Nacogdoches Chamber of Commerce. *Beautiful Nacogdoches, Capital of the East Texas Redlands, Heart of the Piney Woods. Industry, agriculture, education*. Nacogdoches, TX: Nacogdoches Chamber of Commerce, 1944.
- Nacogdoches Land Company. *Nacogdoches County, the East Texas Gold Mine*. Nacogdoches, TX: Nacogdoches Land Company, 19??.
- Nacogdoches Historical Society / Nacogdoches Genealogical Society. *Nacogdoches County Families*. Nacogdoches Genealogical Society, 1985.
- No Author. "Nacogdoches, Texas Centennial, 1716-1936."
- O'Rourke, Thomas P. *The Franciscan Missions in Texas (1690-1793)*. New York: AMS Press, 1927.
- Partin, James Gallaway. "A History of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches County, Texas to 1877." MA Thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1968.
- Sanders, John B. *The Postoffice and Postmasters of Nacogdoches County, Texas, 1845-1930*. Center, TX: The Champion, 1964.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 84

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

---

Sawyer, Henry N. *Statement of Henry N. Sawyer, Moro-Chireno Oil Zone, Nacogdoches Co., Texas*. Shreveport, LA: (s.n.), 1915

Scurlock, Virgie Worsham. "Ante-Bellum Nacogdoches, 1846-1861." Unpublished Master's thesis. Nacogdoches: Stephen F. Austin State University, 1954.

Stephens, A. Ray. "Builders of Texas Collection to 1942."

Taylor, Lawrence S. *A History of the Action of the Political and Civil Authorities and Citizens Relating to the Land Office at Nacogdoches*. Nacogdoches, Tex.: Carraway's Print, 1901.

Turner, Martha Anne. *Old Nacogdoches in the Jazz Age*. Austin: Madrona Press, 1976.

Victor & Victor Consultants, Inc. "Nacogdoches Historic Site Survey and Preservation Feasibility Study." Austin, 1986.

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

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section 10 Page 85

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

---

## **Verbal Boundary Description**

Beginning at the intersection of Pilar and Mound, proceed east approximately 280 feet to include block 17 lots 1 and 2. Then proceed north one block to Main Street, then slightly east to Walker Alley. Proceed the length of one city lot (block 6, lots 6-7), then proceed west to Mound Street. Continue north on Mound, taking in block 7 lots 14 and 15. Turn west and proceed one half block to the rear of lots 7 and turn northward to traverse lot 4 to Church Street. Proceed north on Church to approximately 100 feet south of Arnold Street (at the southern boundary of block 3, lot 5). Turn left and proceed west, following the southern boundaries of block 3 lots 5, 5B, 5A and 4 (these are excluded from the district). At the intersection of Fredonia Street, turn right, and proceed 150 feet north to the southern boundary of block 2 lot 26A. Proceed west along this lot line to reach the north-south alley to the east of block 2 lot 2. At the northeast corner of this lot, turn west and proceed to North Street. Continue south down North Street to Hospital Street. Turn west, and proceed down this street, crossing Pearl Street, to reach Banita Creek. The district extends across the creek bed westward to Old Tyler Road. At this street, travel north for approximately one-quarter mile. Turn west toward the railroad tracks, and proceed south along these to the intersection of Old Tyler and Pilar. Travel east along Pilar, taking in properties along both sides of the street. Cross South Street, and continue along Pilar to Pecan Street. Turn and proceed south along Pecan to the Pecan Street Bridge across Banita Creek. Follow the creek approximately one block to include the bridge at Fredonia Street. Upon reaching Fredonia Street, turn north and travel to Pilar Street. At the intersection of Fredonia and Pilar, turn east and proceed to the intersection of Pilar and Mound, including only properties on the north side of Pilar. This boundary encompasses blocks 8-16, 23-25 portions of blocks 2,3,6, 7, and 17.

## **Boundary Justification**

The boundaries of the district are based on those determined by the consultant and staff of the Texas Historical Commission in April 2006. These boundaries have been modified to include the largest number of properties dating from the period of significance, and the portions of the downtown district that retain the highest degree of integrity with the fewest vacant lots and intrusions. Boundaries have also been drawn to exclude properties along the northern edge of this district that are included in the Washington Square Historic District (on Arnold Street between Church and Fredonia Streets). The railroad tracks off of Old Tyler Road on the western edge of the district provide a logical division between commercial core and the industrial areas and residential areas to the west of the tracks. The south-western edge of the district is marked by Banita Creek, which provides a visual boundary between the commercial and non-commercial development, and the south-eastern edge is marked by Pilar Street, as the boundary between historic and non-historic commercial development. The eastern boundary is drawn at Walker Alley. This small street, positioned at the top of a small hill, physically divides the highly concentrated commercial sector from a less dense and newer commercial area. The northern edge of the district is marked by generally by the development to the south of Hospital Street, with the exception of a few mid-twentieth century properties that are north of Hospital and south of Arnold (the boundary for the Washington Square Historic District). The properties and types of development within these boundaries have retained their character since their earliest construction in the late 1880s.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

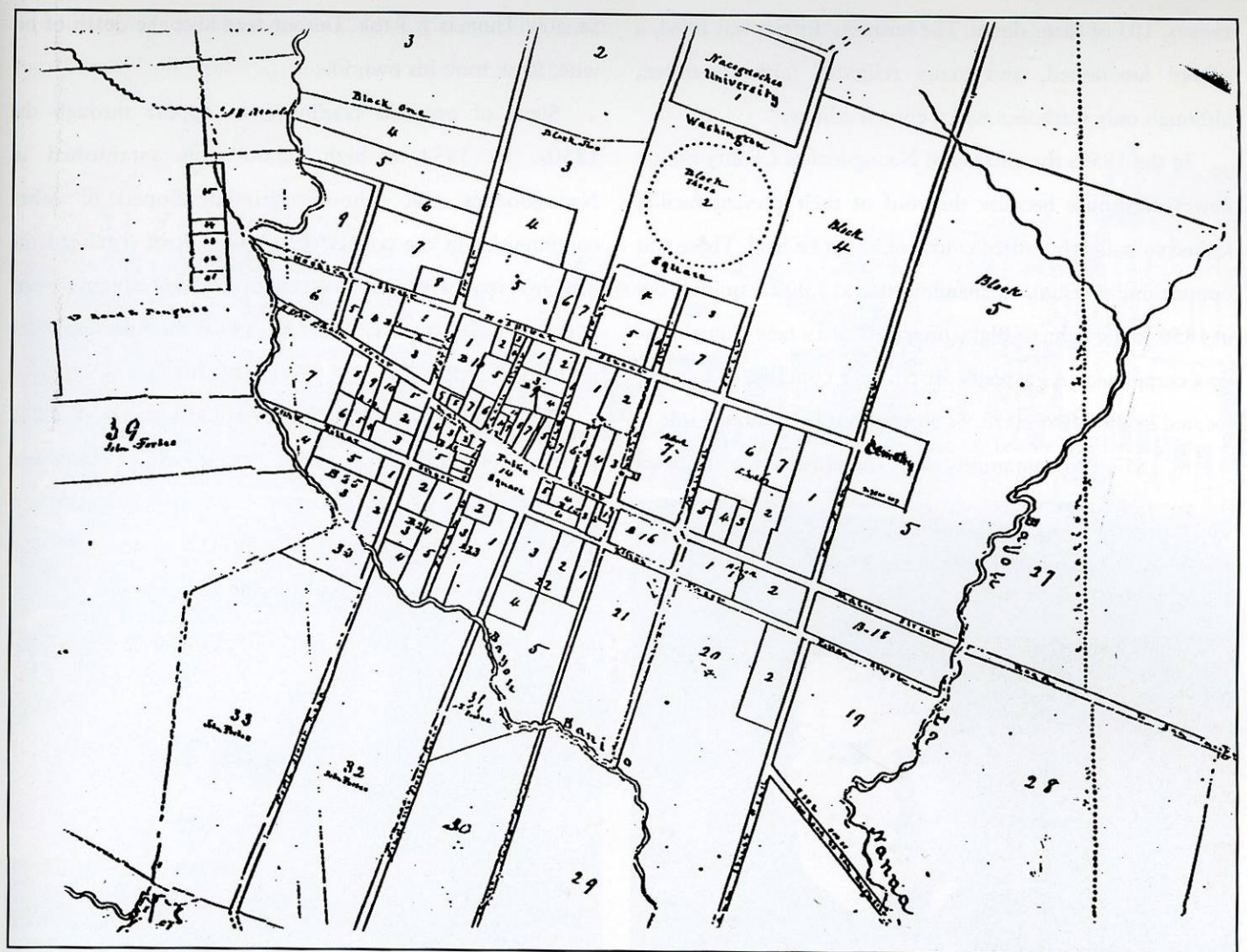
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 86

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

## FIGURES

Figure 1: Nacogdoches city plan, ca 1846.



"Plan of the city and corporation of Nacogdoches by John Forbes, 1846." Map 44 in East Texas Research Center, SFASU.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 87

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 2: Property 66 & 67



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 88

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 3: Property 34 and Property 41





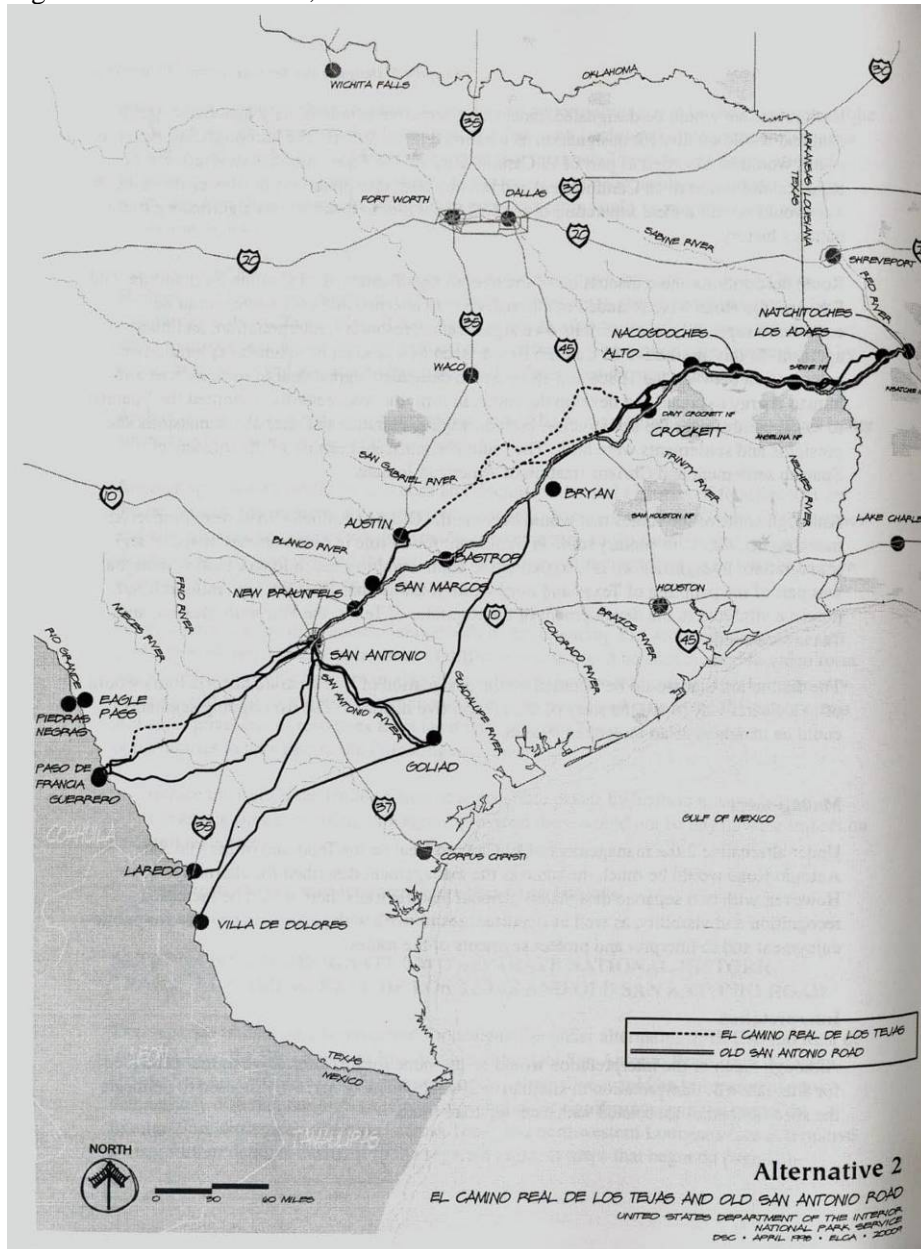
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 89

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 4: El Camino Real, or Old San Antonio Road



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 90

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 5: Old Stone Fort

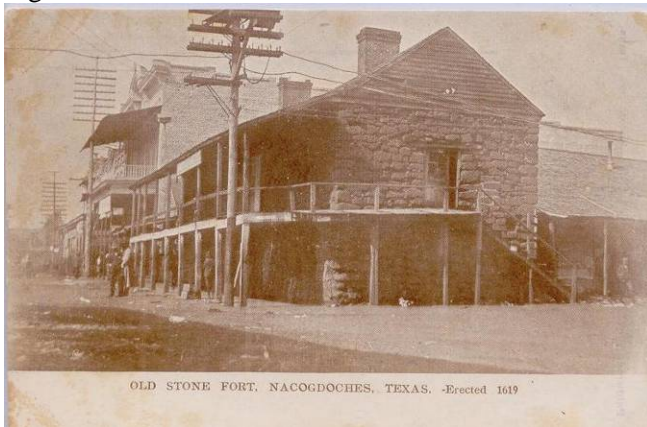
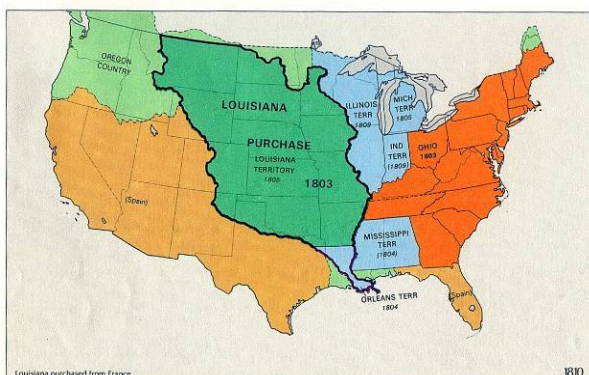


Figure 6: Old Stone Fort, reconstructed 1936



Figure 7: Louisiana Purchase





United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 91

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 8: Map of Nacogdoches County, ca 1857





United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 92

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 9: Courthouses of Nacogdoches



**REMEMBER WHEN?** — Nacogdoches' third courthouse is the red brick two-story structure pictured above, the one in the center with the conical-looking roof structures. This picture, the only one The Sentinel has been able to locate, was taken with a box camera by the late Claude Gramling, brother of Miss Willie Gramling, 518 E. Hospital, in 1905 or 1906. Miss Willie says she believes her brother took the picture to record some

sort of meeting or agitation rather than the building itself. Her opinion stems from the group of men gathered in front of the courthouse and the many horses, buggies, and wagons gathered in the square. The picture was taken from the north side of the square looking south. Lettering on the sign on the building to the left of the courthouse reads, "Jno. H. Cox, General Merchandise."





United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 93

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 10: early Nacogdoches, ca 1880

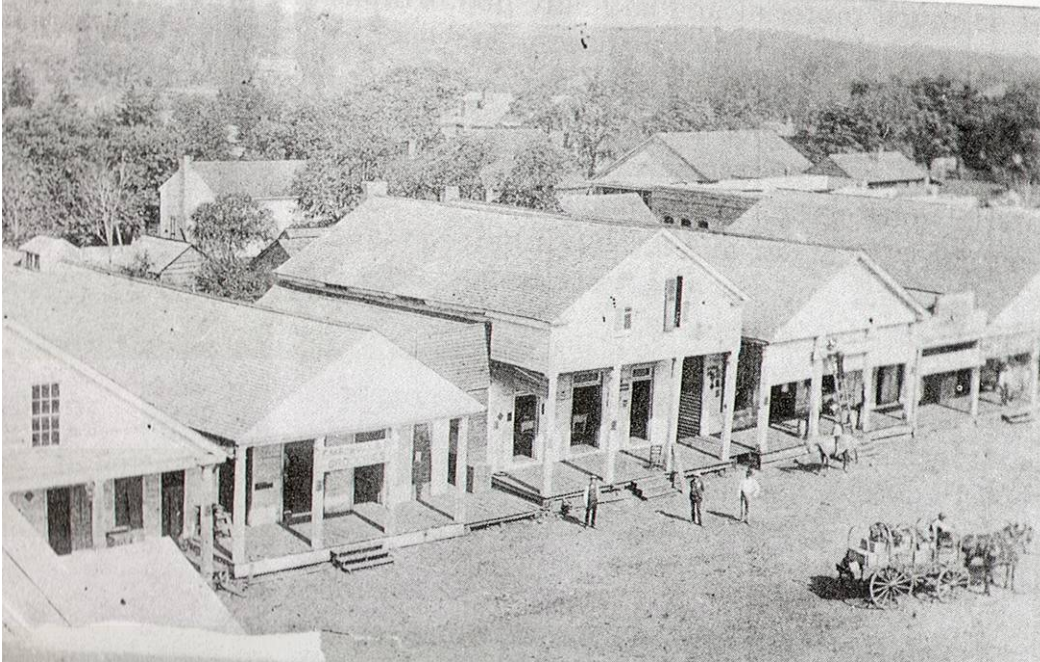


Figure 11: Rail depot, ca 1910



*The old wooden depot that burned down in 1910 when it was struck by lightning.*

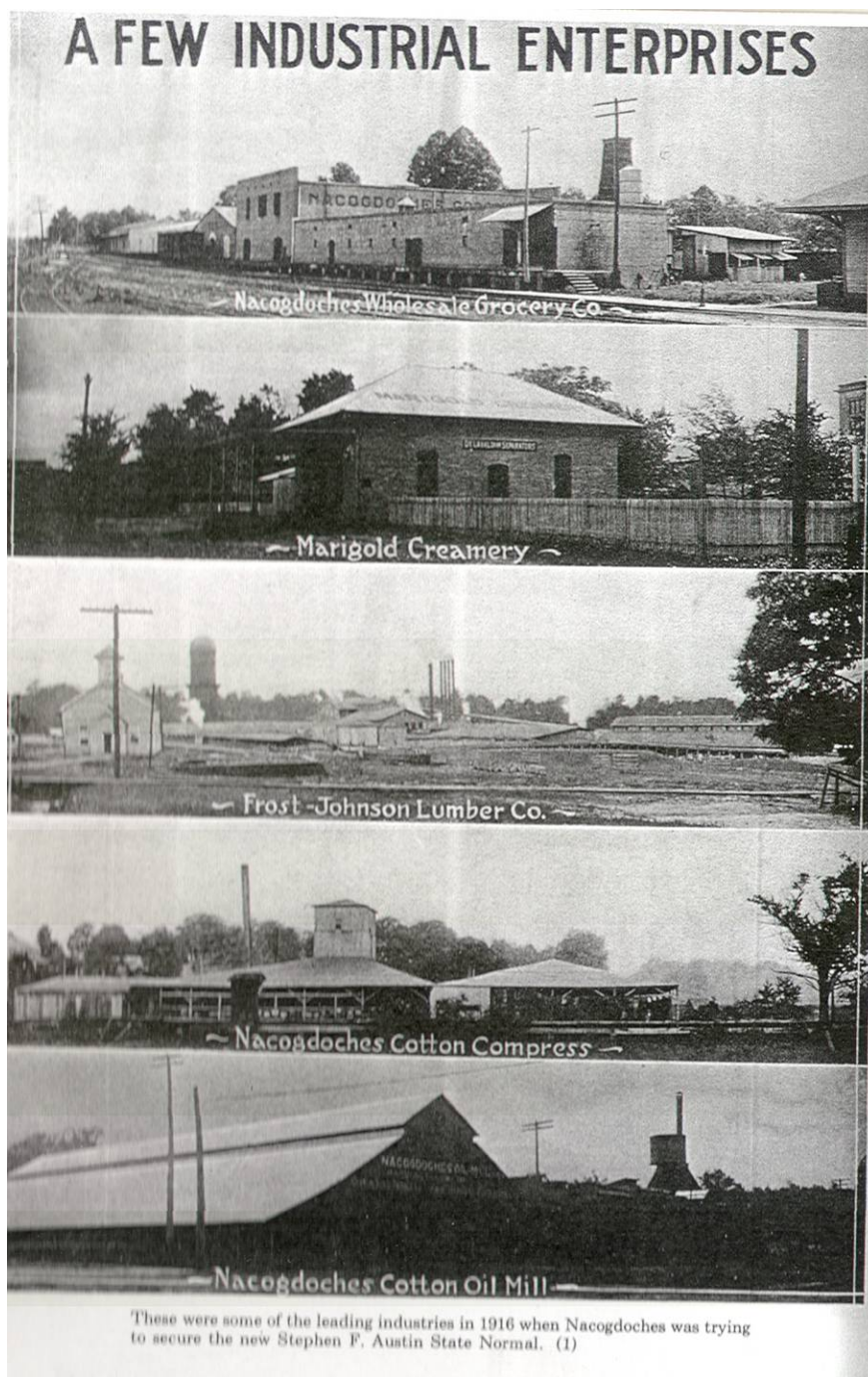
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 94

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 12: Industrial Buildings





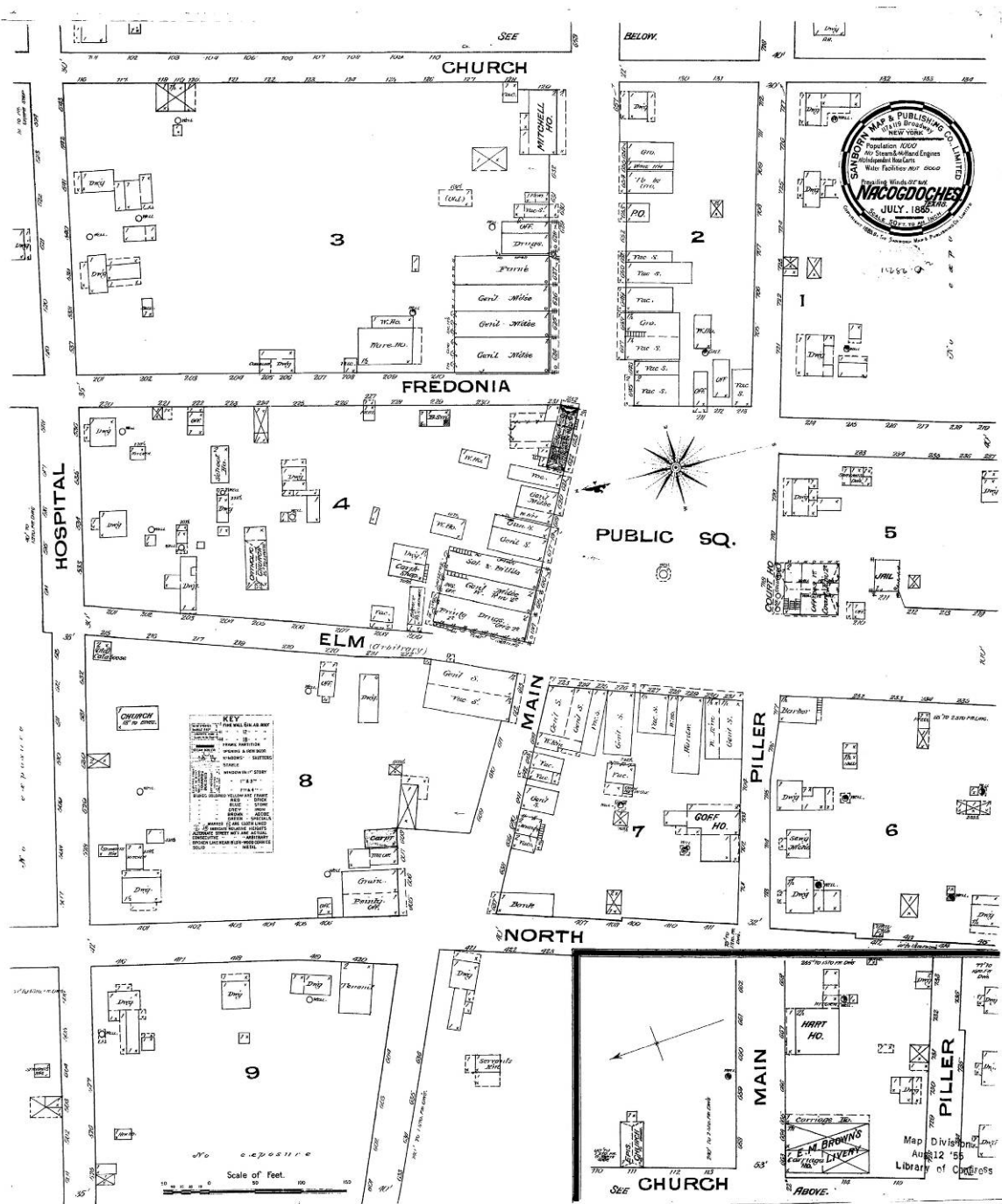
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 95

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 13: Sanborn Map, 1885





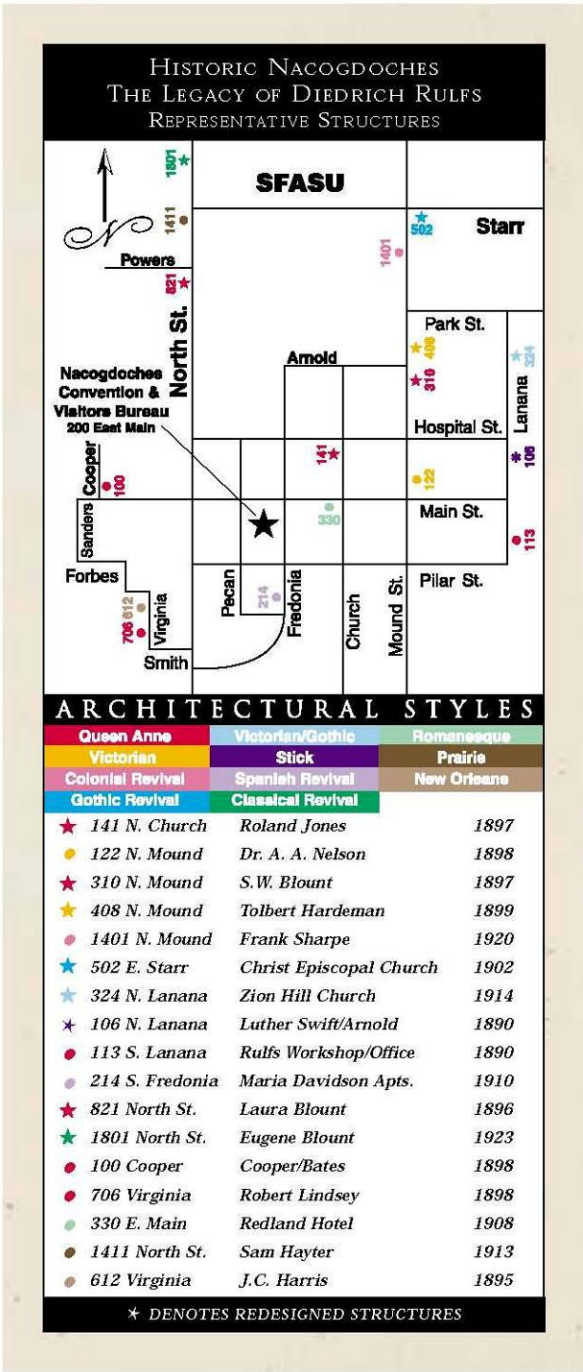
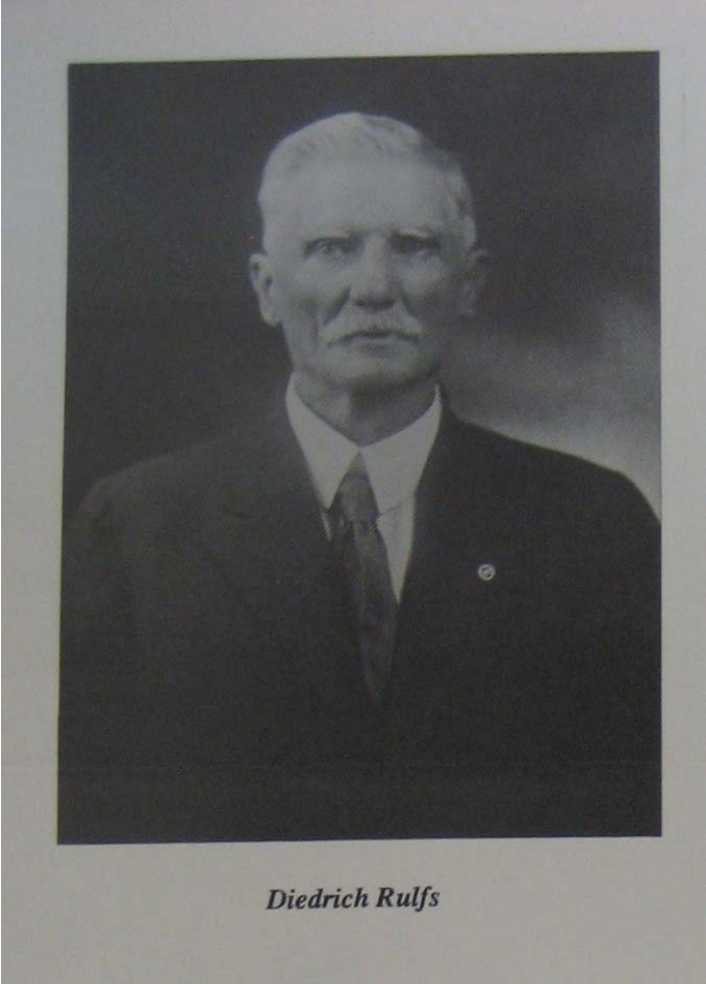
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 96

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 14: Rulfs and Representative Buildings



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 97

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 15: Rulfs, Opera House (current and historic)



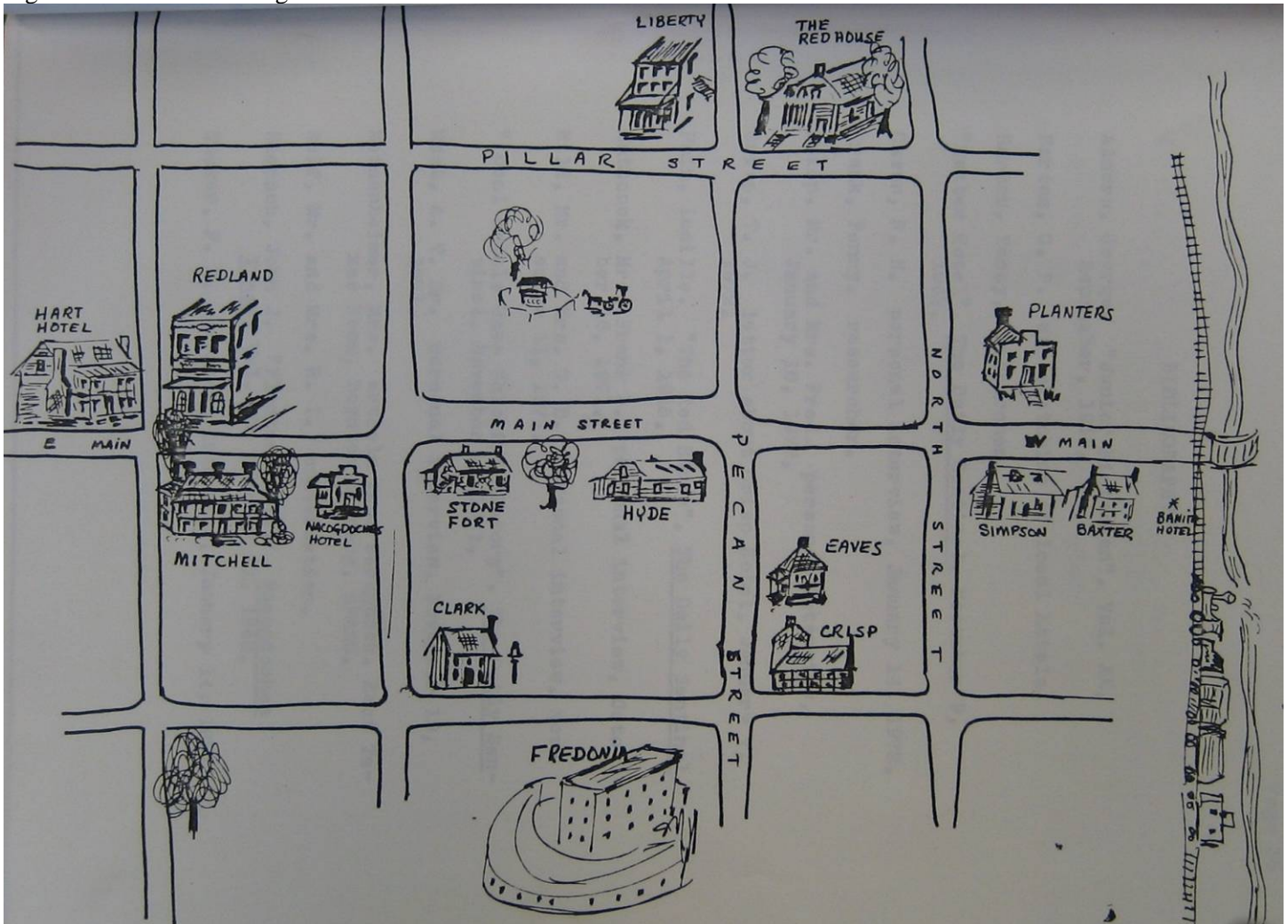
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 98

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 16: Hotels of Nacogdoches





United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 99

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 17: Cotton Exchange



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 100

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 18: Hanging in the Square





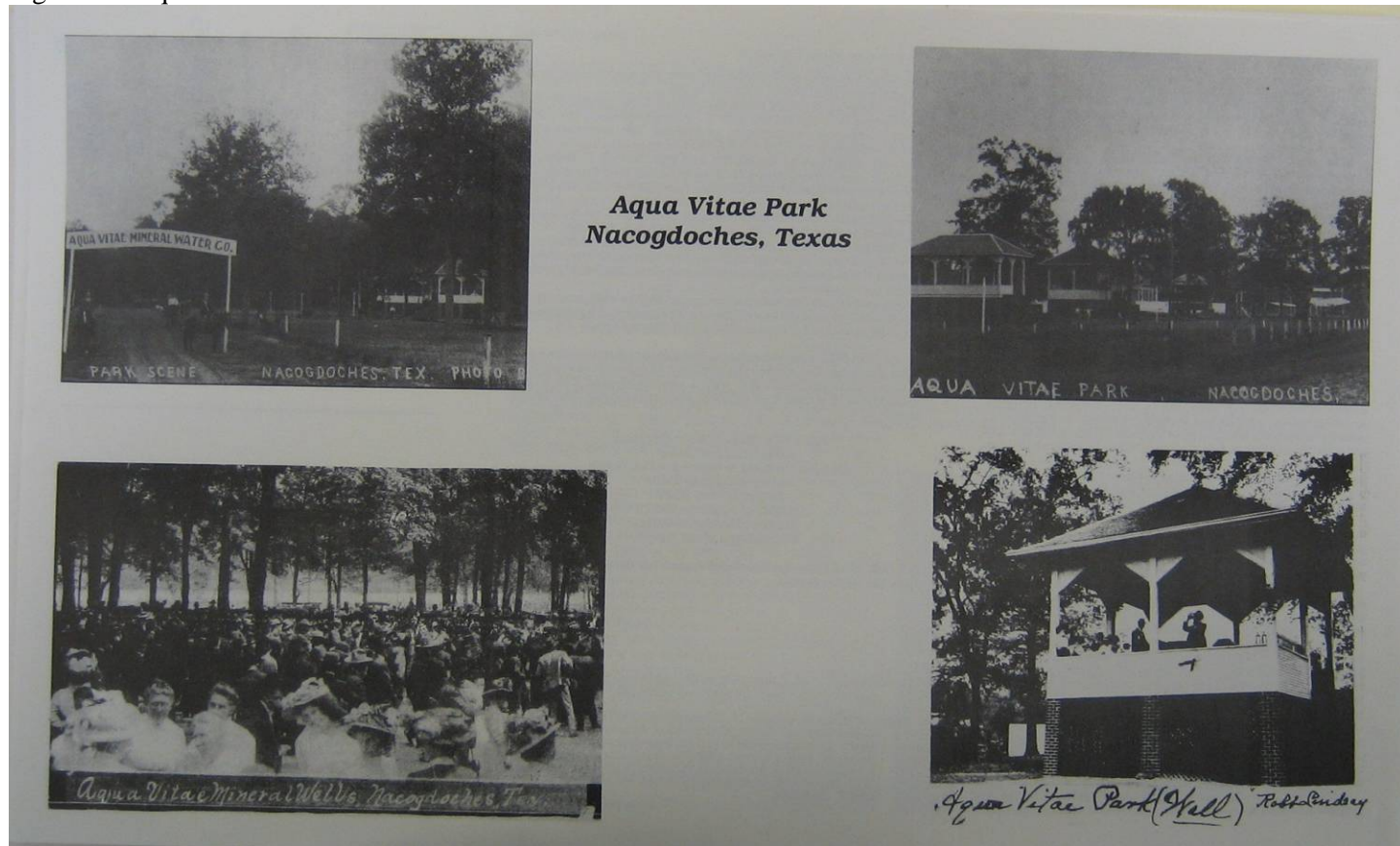
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 101

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 19: Aqua Vitae Park



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 102

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 20: Taking up blocks and paving the square



Figure 21: NIBCO





United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 103

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 22: Nacogdoches County Courthouse

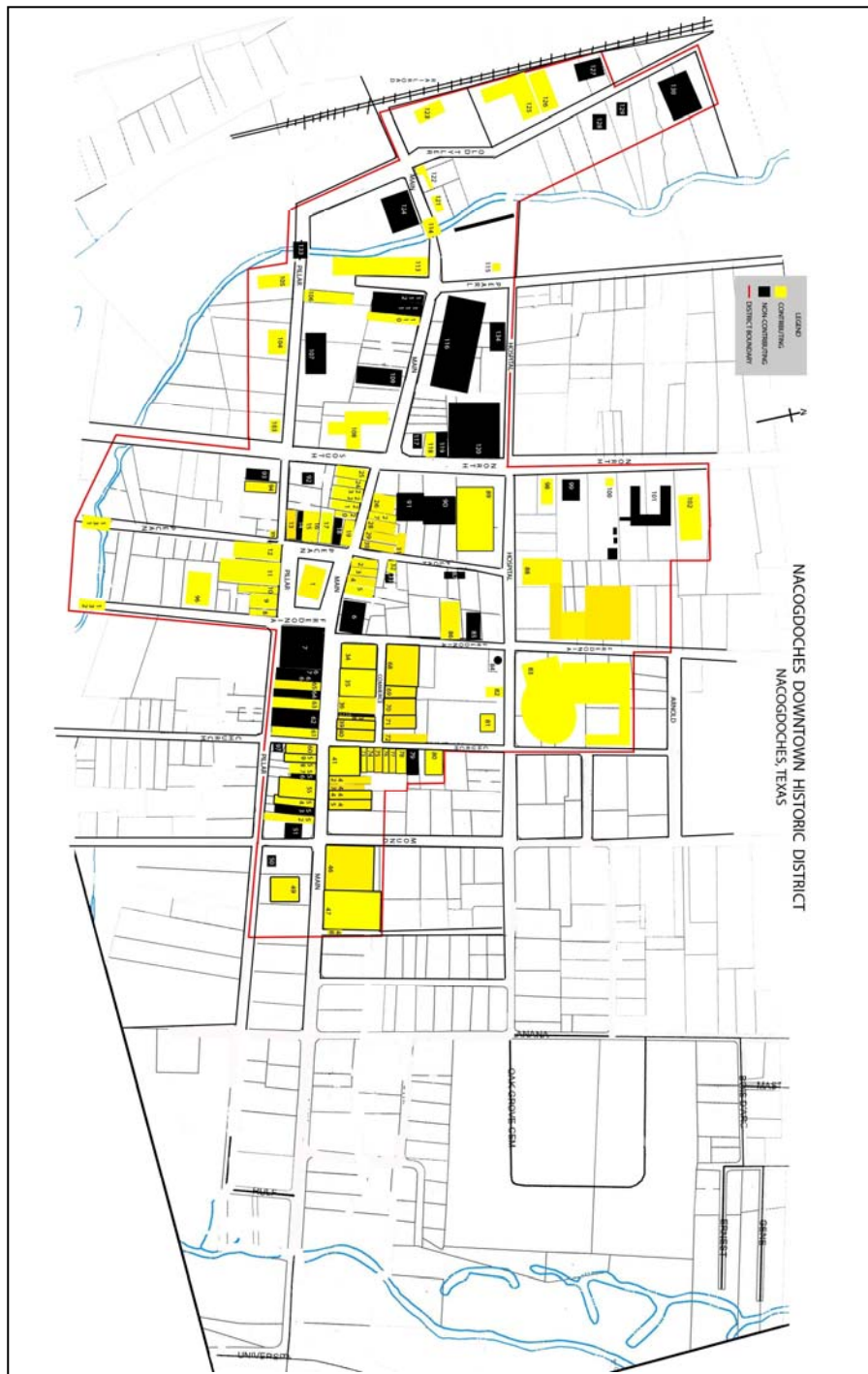


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section MAP Page 104

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 10 Page 105

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

---

PHOTO LOG: Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas  
Photographer: Monica Penick  
April and November 2006

**Former United States Post Office and Federal Building**

200 E. Main  
Property #1  
Facing SE  
National Register (1992)  
Photo #1 of 22

**Roberts Building**

216 E. Pilar  
Property #8  
Facing SW  
National Register (1992)  
Photo #2 of 22

**Ingraham Building**

210 E. Pilar Street  
Property #10  
Facing S  
Registered Texas Historic Landmark (1998); Nacogdoches Historic Landmark  
Photo #3 of 22

**Cox Building / Tausig Tobacco Company**

West side, North Pecan Street  
Property #31  
Facing SW  
Photo #4 of 22

**Cox Building / Tausig Tobacco Company**

West side, North Pecan Street  
Property #31  
Facing W  
Photo #5 of 22

**Mahdeen (Blount-Baker) / Wyatt Building**

204 E. Pilar Street  
Property #11  
Facing SE  
Photo #6 of 22

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 10 Page 106

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

---

**Maria Davidson Apartments**

214 S. Fredonia  
Property #96  
Facing W  
Photo #7 of 22

**Maria Davidson Apartments**

214 S. Fredonia  
Property #96  
Facing N  
Photo #8 of 22

**Old Mize Factory**

412 North Street  
Property #102  
Facing NE  
Photo #9 of 22

**Hotel Fredonia**

200 N. Fredonia  
Property #83  
Facing NE  
Photo #10 of 22

**Hotel Fredonia**

200 N. Fredonia  
Property #83  
Facing N  
Photo #11 of 22

**Banita Creek Bridge**

Pecan Street and Banita Creek  
Property #131  
Facing SW  
Photo #12 of 22

**Banita Creek Bridge**

Pecan Street and Banita Creek  
Property #131  
Facing W  
Photo #13 of 22

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 10 Page 107

Nacogdoches Downtown Historic District  
Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches County, Texas

---

**Hoya Building**

112 South Pecan Street  
Property #13  
Facing NW  
Photo #14 of 22

**House of Traditions**

312 E. Main  
Property #66 and Property #67  
Facing S  
Photo #15 of 22

**Commercial National Bank**

215 E. Main Street  
Property #6  
Facing NE  
Photo #16 of 22

**Main Theater**

517 E. Main Street  
Property #47  
Facing NE  
Photo #17 of 22

**Main Street, 300 Block**

Facing E  
Photo #18 of 22

**Main Street, 300 Block**

Facing NE  
Photo #19 of 22

**Main Street, 200 Block**

Facing NW  
Photo #20 of 22

**Main Street, 100 Block**

Facing NW  
Photo #21 of 22

**North Church Street, 100 Block**

Facing N  
Photo #22 of 22