

PH0663913

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

FEB 27 1978

DATE ENTERED

JUL 24 1978

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

James Phelps White House
AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

200 North Lea Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Roswell,

VICINITY OF

2

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

New Mexico35Chaves005**CLASSIFICATION****CATEGORY**☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS**☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE**☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☒ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Chaves County Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

200 North Lea Avenue

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Roswell, New Mexico

VICINITY OF

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Chaves County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Roswell, New Mexico**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties

DATE

December 19, 1975☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDSNew Mexico State Planning Office

CITY, TOWN

STATE

505 Don GasparSanta Fe, New Mexico 87503

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

—EXCELLENT
☒GOOD
—FAIR

—DETERIORATED
—RUINS
—UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☒UNALTERED
—ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ORIGINAL SITE
—MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Built for James Phelps White, a prominent Roswell area rancher, the two and a half story yellow brick house is located at the northwest corner of Second Street and Lea Avenue in an older residential area west of downtown Roswell. Construction of the house was begun in 1910 and completed in 1912. Built by Mrs. White's father, David Young Tomlinson, the house is said to have been patterned after a house in Fort Worth which Mrs. White liked and where her father and uncles were building contractors.

The house has a single story porch supported by square piers along the east and south sides of the house facing the two streets. On each side of the piers are specially made bricks inscribed with a "W". The east facade of the house is almost symmetrical with rooms projecting beyond either side of the front door and the second floor balcony above. At the northeast corner, attached to the porch, is a square carriage porch, supported by piers. Along the south side of the house, a wing projects at the southwest corner. A second door opens to the porch along the south side. There are service entrances along the north and west sides of the house.

The house is topped by a red Spanish tile hip and valley roof with a hipped dormer centered above the front door and second floor balcony with a second dormer opening to the west. The 30-inch eaves are trimmed with brackets at the corners. The eavestroughs and downspouts are copper. Four brick chimneys project through the roof. The original pressed metal roof with finials at the peaks was replaced with the present tile by the mid-1920's.

The main entrance to the house is a wide, glass paneled door surrounded by leaded glass side lights and transoms, recessed behind octagonal wood columns supporting a wood beam which frame the entrance. The door leads to a wide, oak-floored central hallway with an open stairway to the second floor. To the right of the entrance is the parlor and immediately beyond it is the dining room with sliding oak doors separating the two rooms. Both rooms have oak wainscoting and woodwork. Along the north wall of the parlor is a glazed tile fireplace topped with an oak mantle and in the dining room is a wide bay with two stained glass representations of swans.

Across the hallway from the parlor is a room of the same dimensions, probably a sitting room, which has a door directly to the porch. Beyond it, separated by a sliding door, is a large, rectangular room with an adjacent bathroom probably used a bedroom. The two rooms have brick fireplaces in their common wall. Along the rear of the house are a kitchen, separated from the formal dining room by a butler's pantry and a family dining room and a sun porch which appear to originally have been a screened porch.

There are two flights of steps in the main stairway to the second floor. At the landing between the two flights, in the wall separating the stairs from the service stairs, is a stained glass window depicting a landscape. The stairs lead to a small sitting area with a doorway opening to the narrow balcony. Along the north side of the second floor, directly above the parlor and dining room, are two bedrooms with a bath between them. On the south side are two additional bedrooms and another bath. These bedrooms were presumably used by the four White children. Along the rear of the house are a maid's bedroom and a large room at the southwest corner, originally a screened porch.

The service stairway leads from the basement to the third level, a 20'x30' room used as a library by the White family. The two dormer windows light the floor.

Facing east at what has become a busy intersection, the house is surrounded by spacious grounds. Northwest of the house is a two story building constructed as a barn with a hayloft on the second floor and three stalls in half of the first floor for the family's milk cows. The rest of the floor was used as a garage. Later another garage

(See continuation sheet)

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The James Phelps White House in Roswell is a fine example of early twentieth century residential construction. It is particularly significant because White was a prominent New Mexico rancher and an important force in the development of southeastern New Mexico.

James Phelps White was born in Gonzales, Texas in 1856, the son of Thomas J. White, a half-brother of Major George W. Littlefield, noted Texas rancher. In the mid-1870's White began trailing cattle from central Texas to Dodge City with Littlefield and in 1877 along with his brother Tom White joined Littlefield then operating north of the Canadian River in the Texas Panhandle. In 1881 the LIT operation was sold and soon thereafter White purchased for Littlefield the Bosque Grande Ranch 30 miles north of Roswell along the Pecos River in New Mexico, formerly owned by pioneer cattleman John Chisum. This operation, known as the LFD, was the beginning of a vast ranching enterprise which grew into one of the most important in the state. The Littlefield Cattle Company was organized in the spring of 1883 with Charlie McCarty, a longtime Littlefield employee, holding \$10,000 stock in the company, Tom White \$18,000, James Phelps White \$60,000, and Littlefield holding the remainder, an unknown sum. James Phelps White was in charge of the operation. In the mid 1880's, White acquired the Four Lakes Ranch on the Llano Estacado in Lea County for the Littlefield Company. This was previously ungrazed land and by drilling wells on the range the Littlefield operation was able to withstand the effects of the severe drought which forced many cattlemen out of business during the 1880's. After acquisition of the Four Lakes Ranch, the LFD range extended from the Pecos River on the west to the Texas-New Mexico state line on the east, a distance of about 85 miles, and from Kenna on the north to Monument Spring on the south, approximately 90 miles. In 1901 the Littlefield Cattle Company brought the Yellow House Division of the XIT Ranch in West Texas, approximately 235,000 acres, with Tom and James Phelps White owning half interest. It was on this property that the town of Littlefield, Texas was laid out.

LFD cowpunchers were said to have branded about 13,000 calves a year and ran the Littlefield herds on the open free range for over 20 years before being crowded out by small ranchers, nesters, plowed ground and barbed wire. Major Littlefield had retired from active participation in the ranching operation shortly after the establishment of the LFD at the Bosque Grande, leaving it in the capable hands of his general manager, James Phelps White, of whom one writer said, "He was a real cowpuncher, good with a rope, good on a horse, experienced on the range, and successful by the exacting standards of the balance sheets." Littlefield took up residence in Austin, Texas where he was engaged in banking. Murals in his office building, the Littlefield Building, included scenes from the Yellow House Ranch and the LFD irrigated farm east of Roswell.

After Littlefield's death in 1920, the remainder of the Yellow House Ranch as well as other remaining ranch holdings of the Littlefield Cattle Company became the property of James Phelps White. Writing of White and his brother in 1906, Littlefield said, "What our family is today the Energy and assistance from those boys have made it."

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Williams, J.W. The Big Ranch Country. Wichita Falls, Texas: Terry Brothers, Printers, 1954.
Haley, J. Evetts George W. Littlefield, Texan. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1949
Gracy, David B., II. "George Washington Littlefield, Portrait of a Cattleman."
Southwestern Historical Quarterly 58 (1964): 237-58. #2 Oct. 1964.

(CONTINUED ON CONTINUATION SHEET)#2

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 13 543820 3694920
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at northwest corner of the intersection of Second Street and Lea Avenue, the boundary extends west a distance of 200', then north a distance of 200', east a distance of 200', and wouth a distance of 200' to the point of beginning. The property consists of 4 50' x 200' lots.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Sylvia L. Cook

ORGANIZATION

New Mexico State Planning Office

STREET & NUMBER

505 Don Gaspar

CITY OR TOWN

Santa Fe, New Mexico 87503

DATE

February 1, 1978

TELEPHONE

827-2108

STATE

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

LOCAL

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Thomas W. McKean

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

2-20-78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Charles A. Adams
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

Walter Cole

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Walter Cole
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
DATE 2-24-78
DATE 6-29-78

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 & 8 PAGE 1

Description cont.

- #7 was built of the same yellow brick immediately south of the barn above an abandoned artesian well which at one time furnished water for the house and gardens. The ground level of the yard has gradually risen since the construction of the house which has caused water to puddle around the house. This has caused some settlement of the house at the southwest corner.

In 1975 the four White children deeded the house to the Chaves County Historical Society for use as a historical museum. Before the Museum was dedicated on July 3, 1976, extensive repairs were made. More recently an air conditioning system was installed with the ductwork placed in the basement, attic and closets. The building is now in generally good condition.

- #8 In 1929 White bought the 120,000 acre Long Arroyo ranch 20 miles east of Roswell from the estate of James John Hagerman. He acquired other business interests and managed his varied real estate, farming and ranching interests from the J.P. White Building in downtown Roswell.

On July 22, 1903 White married Lou Tomlinson of Fort Worth and they established their home in Roswell. The Whites were active in the city's civic and cultural affairs. White served as a member of the Board of Regents of the New Mexico Military Institute in Roswell for twenty-two years and the J.P. White Parade Ground at the Institute is named in his honor.

In 1934, at the age of seventy-eight, White became seriously ill and was flown to a hospital in Texas where he died. When he left Roswell he is supposed to have commented on the fact that he had arrived in the Pecos Valley fifty years earlier on a Texas cow horse and he was now leaving the Valley in an airplane. White was certainly responsible for many of the changes that had occurred in the region in the interim.

The house in which White lived for over twenty years and where his wife continued to live until her death in 1972, is a good example of early twentieth century residential architecture. The house was built by David Young Tomlinson, Mrs. White's father, who had been a contractor in Fort Worth before coming to Roswell, and is said to have been patterned after a house in Fort Worth. While not a clear example of a specific style, the house is a builder's interpretation of prevalent western architectural styles. The original pressed metal roof and the brackets supporting it are derived from nineteenth century architectural styles, while elements such as the relatively low-pitched hipped roof, projecting eaves and the strong horizontal elements of the eaves and porch can be credited to the same thought that is basic to the Prairie Style. Other elements of the house, such as its extensive interior woodwork and the trim on the porch columns, which appears almost like a brick interpretation of wood framing members, may have been derived from the Western Stick Style. With its mass and strong horizontal elements, the house is in close harmony with the Roswell landscape and its porch and deep eaves are well adapted to the climate. It is a house which is entirely appropriate to its setting and it reflects the prominence of the family which occupied it.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 2

Whitlock, Vivian H. Cowboy Life on the Llano Estacado. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970.

Wallis, George A. Cattle Kings of the Staked Plains. Dallas: American Guild Press, 1957