

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office  
Other name/site number: 41BX1409  
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 9374 Valhalla  
City or town: Selma State: Texas County: Bexar  
Not for publication: NA Vicinity: NA

3. 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 at the following levels of significance:  
 national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Mark Wolfe State Historic Preservation Officer Date 5/5/17  
Signature of certifying official / Title  
Texas Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register
- other, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature] Date of Action 6/26/2017  
Signature of the Keeper

Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

	Private
X	Public - Local
	Public - State
	Public - Federal

**Category of Property**

X	building(s)
	district
	site
	structure
	object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: NA

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions:** Government: post office; Transportation: road-related (stagecoach stop)

**Current Functions:** Other: interpreted education site

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification:** NO STYLE

**Principal Exterior Materials:** Stucco; Other: Limecrete

**Narrative Description** (see continuation sheets 6 and 7)

Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>A</b>	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>B</b>	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>C</b>	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>D</b>	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations:** NA

**Areas of Significance:** Transportation, Settlement

**Period of Significance:** 1850-1906

**Significant Dates:** 1850, 1852

**Significant Person** (only if criterion b is marked): NA

**Cultural Affiliation** (only if criterion d is marked): NA

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (see continuation sheets 8 through 12)

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

**Bibliography** (see continuation sheets 13 and 14)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- 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, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

**Historic Resources Survey Number** (if assigned): NA

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property:** less than one acre

### Coordinates

#### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

1. Latitude: 29.582438° Longitude: -98.305530°

**Verbal Boundary Description:** The nominated parcel is a subset of a 10.10-acre parcel owned by the City of Selma, Texas (Property ID 1048054, with the legal description "CB 5046N BLK 1 LOT N IRR 66.6 FT OF 1 STAGE STOP SUBD." The nominated property is a rectangular parcel measuring 50 feet by 56 feet (0.065 acres) approximately 155 feet north of the intersection of Valhalla Road and N. Evans Road in Selma, Texas. The nominated building is surrounded by a four-foot-tall decorative iron fence with coursed limestone posts. The fence serves to protect the structure itself and provide a small buffer zone around it.

**Boundary Justification:** The nominated parcel includes the building and its immediate surroundings. It is likely that additional support facilities may have originally extended outside of the fenced area, but archaeological and archival investigations have not determined the extent of the site boundary.

## 11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Steve A. Tomka Ph.D.  
Organization: Raba Kistner Environmental Inc.  
Street & number: 12821 West Golden Lane  
City or Town: San Antonio State: Texas Zip Code: 78249  
Email: stomka@rkci.com  
Telephone: (210) 699-9090  
Date: April 2016

## Additional Documentation

**Maps** (see continuation sheet 15)  
**Additional items** (see continuation sheets 16 through 32)  
**Photographs** (see continuation sheet 5, and pages 33 through 38)

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**Photograph Log**

Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office  
Selma, Bexar County, Texas  
Photographed by Steve Tomka, May 2016

Photo 1: Selma Stagecoach Building, looking Southeast.

Photo 2: Selma Stagecoach Building, looking southwest.

Photo 3: Selma Stagecoach Building, looking south.

Photo 4: Selma Stagecoach Building, looking northwest.

Photo 5: Selma Stagecoach Building, looking east.

Photo 6: Selma Stagecoach Building, looking northeast.

Photo 7: Selma Stagecoach Building, front room immediately inside door, looking south.

Photo 8: Selma Stagecoach Building, looking northwest to front of room.

Photo 9: Selma Stagecoach Building, detail of wall and ceiling construction.

Photo 10: Selma Stagecoach Building, detail of small second room.

Photo 11: Selma Stagecoach Building, detail of wall construction.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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### Description

The Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, site 4BX1409, is in Selma, north-central Bexar County, Texas. The site is only a few hundred yards south of the Harrison House (NRHP 2006) the home of the one-time proprietor of the Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office. The property was stabilized in 2012, and consists of a single two-room building that served as a coach stop between 1850 and 1852 and as the first Post Office for the Town of Selma between until 1906. The building is constructed of poured limecrete, a combination of hydraulic lime and an aggregate, such as gravels, that creates a breathable construction material. The absence of cement in the matrix ensures that moisture can travel freely through the material. The roof of the building consists of wood shingles attached to a framework of pine crossbeams. An interior cross-wall served to divide the original building into two rooms. The windows and door frames are rough-hewn. The walls of the building were constructed by pouring limecrete into a trench excavated around the perimeter of the building. The current appearance of the north elevation is a recent configuration. Prior to restoration, the north elevation consisted of a board-and-batten wall, but it is unclear whether this was the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century appearance of the wall, or whether the limecrete wall extended around the entire perimeter of the building.

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### Site and Boundaries

The building is surrounded by a four-foot tall decorative iron fence supported by limestone columns (Figure 3). The area encompassed within the fence measures 56 by 50 feet, or 0.065 acres in size (Figure 4). The fence serves to protect the building itself and a small buffer zone around it. Given that some support facilities are expected near even the most basic of stage coaches, it is likely that the area contained within the existing fence does not represent the entire site. Archaeological investigations within and immediately adjacent to the building have recovered artifacts that are associated with a broad range of activities. These artifacts included materials associated with barn and workshop activities, kitchen and household items, arms and ammunition, personal and clothing associated artifacts, and construction materials. The presence of the barn and workshop items indicates that some type of support or repair facility may have been associated with the stage stop. Similarly, the wealth of kitchen and household items (n=381; Nickels and Zapata 2005: Table 6), combined with the large number of faunal remains recovered (n=289 pieces) suggests that food preparation and consumption were carried out on site. That is, the passengers were provided meals at the site during their brief respite. These artifacts signal both that the range of activities carried out at the site was broad and that there were facilities other than the single building encompassed within the fenced area. While it is likely that additional facilities and features may have existed in support of the stagecoach stop near the building, it is not known exactly what subsurface elements of these features, facilities and perhaps buildings may remain buried outside of the limits of fenced-in tract. To date, archaeological investigations have been limited to the immediate vicinity of the building and the larger area surrounding the building has not been adequately examined to determine what if any archaeological remains may be buried that could document the range of activities carried out on site. Because the range and preservation condition of such data types is not presently known, we are not advocating for the nomination of the site under Criterion D.

### Construction Techniques

The eastern and western elevations were constructed through the stacking of a series of pours that measured 12-inches by 16-inches. The pours would have been supported by forms made of lumber and braced by 2x4 members. Archaeological investigations conducted by the staff of the Center for Archaeological Research at the University of Texas at San Antonio (CAR-UTSA) indicate that no stone foundation was present under the base of the walls. Rather, the very first course was simply a pour directly into a trench. This construction technique, referred to as “tabby” is rather unique among the surviving historic properties of the state. The technique consists of making the lime out of either burnt shell or limestone, and mixing the friable lime with sand, gravels and water to create a matrix that hardens as it dries. The tabby employed in the stagecoach stop building consists of lime-based

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caliche matrix with natural cobbles derived from the bed of Cibolo Creek. The use of shells and oysters was most frequent in the coastal states (i.e., Florida, North and South Carolina) where shell and oyster beds are common.

A survey of stage coach-related buildings in Texas, conducted by the CAR-UTSA, found that there were only three sites employing the same or similar (i.e., limecrete) construction technique (Sauer et al. 1998). One is the Sebastopol stage stop in Guadalupe County, and the remaining two are the Edward Perry House and the James Power House located in Refugio County. The last two were built between circa 1830 and 1834, while the Sebastopol stage coach stop was constructed around 1850 (Nickels and Zapata 2005:22-23).

### **Building Condition Prior to Stabilization**

In 2001, prior to the initiation of the stabilization activities, the building had partially collapsed (Figures 5 and 6). The building was undergoing differential settling and the east and west walls of the building had been damaged by underground tree root growth that contributed to the formation of several cracks along both the east and west walls of the building which are load bearing. The north elevation of the building was collapsed as were the northwest and northeast corners of the wall (Figure 7). The south elevation of the building exhibited a massive vertical crack that ran from the window to the base of the wall (Figure 6). The west wall of the building was in good condition and virtually plumb, the east wall was leaning outward (i.e., to the east) near the top. The interior wall attached to the east elevation and dividing the building into two rooms also had collapsed (Figure 8). A doorway was present in the middle of the partition wall. The interior face of the north wall was in relatively good condition.

The roof was framed out using 2x4-inch rafters but a roof ridge beam was not used, and ceiling rafters also were not present. A wood beam was installed into a pocket along the top of the wall and this beam was connected to a top plate, the roof consisted of overlapping pieces of corrugated metal covering wood shingles mounted on 1x4 inch nailers. The roof deck consisted of one-inch-thick and fifteen-inch-wide wood lath that spanned the roof rafters. The lath had been axe-shaped and still retained tree bark on one face. The roof covering consisted of sawn wood shingles that were approximately 17-inches long.

The floor appears to have been dirt or caliche. Approximately 75 percent of the original 1850-built building was considered intact at the time of the CAR-UTSA archaeology project that took place in 2005, before restoration efforts commenced.

### **Restoration Activities and Current Condition of Building**

During the restoration activities that were completed in 2012, the partially-collapsed north façade and northeast and northwest corners of the exterior walls were rebuilt. The interior wall that divided the two rooms also was rebuilt. To carry out the restoration, the same cobbles and gravels employed in the original construction and obtained from nearby Cibolo Creek were employed. To ensure that the limecrete formula used in the restoration matched or was a close approximation of the original, samples of the material were collected, tested and reformulated prior to restoration. The same limecrete also was used to patch holes and cracks that were present in the walls of the building. The current condition of the building is shown in Photos 1 through 11.

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### Statement of Significance

The Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office was established only three years following the 1847 founding of the settlement of Cibolo, later renamed Selma. It was constructed between 1850 and 1852 and functioned as a stagecoach stop until no later than 1854, and as a post office until 1906. The stage coach connected the new settlement to the early Texas transportation system, while the post office legitimized its administrative existence. The building and its functions were key in the further growth of the settlement. The stage line was in operation between 1846 and 1852 and during this period served as a stagecoach stop for passengers traveling from Indianola to the interior of Texas, and from Austin to San Antonio. The stage line also serviced three post lines for the movement of mail and small packages between the port city of Indianola and inland destinations. Since the building served as a stagecoach stop and the first post office for the settlement, it also played a significant role in the development and spread of the very first public transportation system in the region. It represents one of the few remaining architectural reminders of the extensive system of roads, way-stations, and support facilities that was the foundation of all that came later in terms of the automobile, the federal highway system, and the support network of facilities that in some instances made towns and in others caused them to wither. The property is nominated under Criterion A in the areas of Settlement and Transportation at the local level of significance.

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### Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century Stage Lines in Texas

Until the invention of the telegraph in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, transportation and communication were dramatically interlinked, as information was transmitted either in person or via mail across a primitive road system that had been in place since prehistoric times. By the early 1860s, telegraph lines provided a new avenue for the transmission of information over long distances, evolving into an effective infrastructure network connecting both coasts. The telegraph network connected mainly the largest population centers, leaving many communities on the fringes of the information flow. In the southern portion of the nation, including Texas, communication of information and transportation took place along the same network.

Beginning in 1847, San Antonio became a central destination of mail and stage lines that often originated from Houston, Indianola, or Corpus Christi (Thonhoff 1971). Initially, express riders on horseback delivered overland mail. Mail along these early routes was delivered weekly and ran between Corpus Christi and San Antonio (Newsom 1916). Typically, express riders were extra-duty soldiers, although occasionally civilians carried out the job. Mail was collected in San Antonio and distributed to the scattered posts in western and northern Texas (Campbell 2003:199). In 1854 a stage line of four-horse coaches was in operation from San Antonio through Helena and Goliad, ending at Victoria (Thonhoff 2004:37). This route was operated by L. S. Owings, one of the founders of Karnes County and Helena, and serviced Helena which had just earlier become the county seat. The Owings's stage line followed the old ox-cart road and raised the town of Helena in regional significance (Thonhoff 1971:11-13). During the 1870s there were three stage lines operating through Karnes County: one through Ecleto, one up the San Antonio River through Helena to San Antonio, and one from San Antonio through Tordilla Hills to Corpus Christi (Thonhoff 1965:6B). Many more serviced the surrounding area (Thonhoff 1965).

### The Stage Coach Stop

The stage stop was an integral part of the stage line system, in that it allowed the teams of horses to be changed out, and for the passengers to grab a quick bite to eat and stretch their legs (Carter 1994; Kwedar and Hawes 1981; McKey 2015). Stage coach stop distribution across the landscape was conditioned as much by the stamina and number of horses pulling the carriage as the patience of the passengers. Stops were distributed approximately twelve miles or so apart, the distance typically traveled over a four-hour stretch. Passengers could carry and consume food during the trip but proper etiquette dictated that if you partook in drink and sustenance, an offer to share was a must.



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Early stage stops consisted nothing more than a one-room building with an attached corral and minimal accommodations for passengers. Because travel was often unpredictable, cooks typically could not depend on a specific time to prepare meals for, instead, in those stage stops that did offer a hot meal, the meals were pre-cooked. The typical meals offered included beans, mutton, soup and bread, with fried eggs offered upon request.

Stagecoach stops varied in size and the types and numbers of facilities that were associated with them. Many stops consisted of a single room building and a corral that housed the team of fresh horses or mules that would be harnessed to the coach as soon as it pulled in. When long multi-day travel was involved before reaching a destination, some stage coach stops offered rooms for the weary travelers that would allow them to rest and grab a hot meal before resuming their travels. Stagecoaches that arrived to major towns would provide more luxurious arrangements for passengers and a livery stable that would provide opportunities for proper care of the equipment and horses. Inns and taverns were associated with most of these stops and the associated accommodations tended to be more luxurious.

While there were often distinct lighter coaches that were manufacture for the mail, mail and passengers were typically transported together on most stage coaches (Ahnert 2013). Given the costs of feeding and taking care of the teams of horses and mules, and the costs of maintaining the stage stops, the stage coach business may not have been a very lucrative enterprise. It is perhaps for this reason that in 1850, the Brown and Tarbox (John F. Brown and Lyman Tarbox) sold their Austin to San Antonio passenger stage line to Harris and McCulloch and retained only their mail route.

### Stage Coaches and Horse Teams

As suggested by a newspaper advertisement that appeared in the *Texian Advocate* of Victoria for the “Harrison and McCulloch United States Mail Line of Stages,” the coaches employed by the stage line may have been the egg-shaped carriages (Figure 9 a and b) manufactured by the Abbot Downing Company of Concord, New Hampshire (Figure 10). While they were not the only coach manufacture company of the mid-nineteenth century, most of the coaches that traveled the early lines were built by the firm between 1830s and 1860s. Another advertisement for the Saltmarshes’ Line of U.S. Mail Stages advertises the use of Troy Coaches. These were manufactured in Troy, New Jersey. The manufacture of carriages and coaches was one of Troy’s main industries during the first few decades of the nineteenth century. Troy coaches were the most common coaches used by stage lines in the southern states well into the 1850s.

Given that the advertisement does not specifically identify the Concord coach, which would have been a strong selling point, it is more likely that the stage coach or coaches used by the Harrison & McCulloch U.S. Line of Stages would have been the more durable mud wagons commonly used under the poor road conditions of the coastal plains (Figure 11). The “mud wagons” were a variant of the Concord stage coach that was typically referred to as the “Celerity Coach.” It was the coach that was favored during the rainy season and in regions with considerable rain because it was less likely to get mired in the mud. The mud wagons were covered with canvas on the upper portion of their shells and the lower half was built tough and durable but lighter than the more typical Concord version. These coaches accommodated 4-6 passengers, their luggage, which typically was placed in a box against the back of the carriage, and mail that was transported between the various destinations of the coach line for personal and/or government business.

Stage coach drivers also were an integral part of the trip. Whether one arrived in one piece or had a rough trip often depended on the skill of the drivers to keep the coach upright and the horses working together. Not only did the drivers have to keep hold of the reins, but also control the slack and wield the whip, and coordinate the team of

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horses or mules to work together all while the coach traveled at a typical speed of five miles per hour although under the best of conditions, they can reach speed of about eight miles per hour.

Conditions during the trip were rugged by most standards. Travelers were advised to preferably wear old clothing that one would not mind becoming dusty and even muddy at times as the roads were often dusty and mud-holes were common. Ladies were encouraged to wear calico or gingham dresses and veils to keep the dust out of their faces. Jackets or coats were a necessity especially in the mornings. In a sign of how difficult travel conditions could be, men were told to wear work clothing because they may be asked to remove a broken wheel or put on a new one or help pull the wagon out of a mud-hole. Bandannas were to be worn by men to keep dust out of their noses. Of course, these bandanas were later to become the iconic covers over the faces of bandits that robbed the coaches on a regular basis (Iowa History Web Site, accessed 2016). In addition, as even as late as the 1850s, Indian attacks persisted in the open countryside and robberies were not uncommon.

### **End of the Stage Lines**

The arrival of the railroad to the region in the late 1870s and 1880s brought with it new business, opportunity, and urbanization. The coming of the railroad also began to shift the momentum away from the towns that had begun to grow along the cart roads. While the arrival of the railroads was clearly a salvation to many communities, to others they were their downfall. By the 1920s, as automobiles became popular, dirt roads became insufficient and the highway-building era began. By 1923 the first roads in the region were being paved (Schuenemann 1954:40). Within about 30 years a network of modern roads developed. Paved roads became main arteries allowing people to drive farther to work and shop. As in the case of the railroad, the arrival of the automobile ended many of the services supplied by the railroads including passenger and mail services (Schuenemann 1954:40). Many towns bypassed by paved roads withered while others crossed by them flourished and are major metropolitan centers even nearly 100 years after being there when the first stretch of highway was covered with asphalt. According to the *Texas Almanac*, the last recorded non-recreational use of a stagecoach for public transportation occurred in Lake Jackson and was precipitated by the gasoline shortages associated with World War II (Texas Almanac 2016).

### **The John S. Harrison and William H. McCulloch Stage Stop and Post Office**

The Republic of Texas postal system was established in 1835, based on a recommendation of the General Council (Newsom 1916). The initial order called for the establishment of mail service from San Felipe de Austin to Cantonment Jessup (in Louisiana), to the Headquarters of the Army, or to Bexar and Velasco (Newsom 1916:104). Section 34 of the Ordinance of the General Council called for postal routes to be established from the General Post Office to the principal town of each municipality of Texas. The routes entered operation as soon as contract could be issued and the postmaster general could identify the roads on which the mail was to be transported (Newsome 1916:117). The first postal route in Texas began in 1835. By December of 1836, Congress had authorized the establishment of four routes located in east Texas. Post offices were to be established along the routes as the Post Master deemed necessary and prudent.

By 1840, the number of postal routes had decreased to 36 (Newsome 1916:119); among these were Route No. 27 from Victoria to Live Oak Point, and routes No. 31 and No. 32 from Austin to San Antonio, and from Gonzales to Victoria, respectively. Several routes continued to be established through 1842, and on January 6, 1843, another 21 routes were authorized (Newsom 1916:122). Among these was Route 17, from Victoria to Gonzales. These routes were the precursors of those that came in the mid-1840s that became part of the business interests of John S. Harrison.

The John S. Harrison and William H. McCulloch business partnership may have gotten its start in 1846 through the acquisition of the rights to the U.S. Postal Route 6154 that ran between Gonzales and New Braunfels. By the next

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year, the two partners established the first stage line between Port Lavaca and the town of Victoria, which allowed newcomers to Texas to move inland to Victoria, where roads led deeper into central Texas. By November 9, 1847, the Harrison & McCulloch line was servicing Port Lavaca and New Braunfels, as shown in an advertisement (Figure 12) published in the March 2, 1849 *Texian Advocate* (Vol. 3, No 44).

By May 1848, Harrison had purchased and was managing the Victoria Hotel in Victoria, Texas, a magnificent two-story building at the corner of Bridge Street and Forrest Streets (Figure 13). The hotel catered to German immigrants who would arrive to Indian Point usually through Galveston. The 1873 Bird's Eye view of Victoria (Figure 14), appears to show the Victoria Hotel behind what appears to be the Trinity Episcopal Church (established in 1867). The Harrison & Brown stage line provided service between San Antonio and Port Lavaca. As seen in the 1848 Victoria Hotel ad, Harrison had a great deal of interest in promoting the stage line that he owned with his partner. By March 2, 1849, Harrison had sold the Victoria Hotel and General Stage Office to S.B. Mixon (Figure 15).

Sometime in 1848 (if not earlier), Harrison also entered a partnership with Dr. Caleb S. Brown, of Gonzales. On June 17, 1850, the partners ended the partnership. The termination of the contract indicates that "...they have lately been associated as partners." and therefore no date is given for the establishment of the partnership. Harrison and McCulloch retained seven of the horses that belonged to the partnership as payment for all debts (Figure 17). By 1850 the partners also acquired the rights to the Gonzales to Port Lavaca postal route, Route No. 6155. These routes essentially connected Port Lavaca on Lavaca Bay with the towns of Victoria, Gonzales, and New Braunfels, allowing the stage line to transport mail and passengers deep inland. The same year, the partners acquired the rights to the U.S. Postal Route 6285 which connected Austin and San Antonio. The route appears to have begun in July 1850 (Figure 18) and according to an advertisement in the San Antonio Ledger, serviced Austin and San Antonio via New Braunfels and San Marcos. It is likely, however, that additional stops were added as time went on including Manchaca, Bonito, Tier, and Selma (Figure 19; Haas 1968:90; National Archives, Mail Routes, L.A. and Texas, 1850-54).

Between 1851 and 1852, Harrison moved to the small outpost of Cibolo and purchased approximately 127 acres from various property owners in the area. The Cibolo post office opened in 1852, where Harrison served as the first postmaster for two years. By 1853, the routes that were accommodated by the Harrison & McCulloch Stage Lines no longer operated under that proprietorship, as seen in an advertisement from the *Texian Advocate* published in September 24, 1853 (Figure 20). In 1854, Harrison and his family relocated, and by 1858 was residing in Pleasanton, Texas.

It was not easy to make a profit in the stage coach business due to the expenses incurred in provisioning the many mules and horses at each stage stop and maintaining the wagons used in the operation. Many stage lines were established during the mid-nineteenth century and competition for business was fierce. Some of the more successful competition came from the Lyman Tarbox & John F. Brown stage line that operated between Port Lavaca and San Antonio, running through Victoria, Gonzales, Seguin and New Braunfels, a major destination for German immigrants. Competition became even more intense in 1848, when a third stage line, the Corpus Christi-San Antonio Transportation Line began running the San Patricio trail.

As time went on, many of the companies that went into the business shifted to the more lucrative mail delivery routes, and so it was that in 1850 the Lyman Tarbox and John F. Brown passenger line from Austin to San Antonio was discontinued as the company shifted into the mail delivery business. Harrison and McCulloch took over the route and added it to its capacity to move passengers from Indian Point all the way to San Antonio and Austin. Only after 1860 did service extend north of Austin and by then, the Harrison and McCulloch Stage Line was no longer in service.

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### *John S. Harrison and Family*

John Sobiesky Koontz Harrison was the son of Benjamin Peachy and Elizabeth Betsy Harrison. Benjamin was born in 1772 in Rockingham Virginia. The Harrison Family was entrenched in the early history of Rockingham County, Virginia. In addition, the Harrison Family was part of the early migration of settlers to the West (Heide 2000). Elizabeth was born on February 15, 1792, also in Rockingham, Virginia. It appears that Benjamin and Elizabeth married in 1809. They had eight children together. The first child was Achilles L. Harrison, born in Tennessee on February 13, 1810. Three of the children (Jane, Joseph, and Carter) died in infancy.

John and his two older brothers, Achilles and Erasmus Darwin, joined the fight for Texas independence. Achilles was a Second Lieutenant during the 1836 engagements. He either died of yellow fever in San Antonio, Texas in 1836, or he died near Houston in 1840. Erasmus was killed during the Goliad Massacre on March 27, 1836. John served in Captain Burnett's Company, First Regiment, First Brigade under the command of Col. Edwin Morehouse. After the war, John lived in Fort Bend County, obtaining a second-class certificate of 320 acres. In 1845, he petitioned for the estates of his brothers. After being awarded the property, John married Martha Jane McCulloch Graves (Figure 21). Martha had been married to R.L. Graves circa 1846 and had one child together. It appears that Graves passed away shortly after the birth of Mary E. Graves. Martha and John Harrison married between on July 15, 1847. She and John may have adopted Mary, as her name appears as Harrison in later records, but it also appears as Graves in the 1860 census. Martha and John Harrison had five children.

Harrison was listed on the 1860 census as a stock raiser in Pleasanton, Texas. In May 1861, John enlisted in the Confederate Army, in the Mounted Minutemen of Atascosa County under the command of Capt. Edward Walker. The Texas Muster Roll Index cards states that he entered service as a Private on May 7, 1861 in Pleasanton, Texas. Harrison died on December 31, 1864 in Waco or Bell County, Texas.

### *William H. McCulloch*

William H. McCulloch, the business partner of J.S. Harrison, was the middle child of William G. and Margery Lee McCulloch from Montgomery County, South Carolina. His brother, George R.D. McCulloch (1824-1890), became proprietor of the McCulloch House in Indianola in 1852, as shown in this advertisement in the San Antonio Ledger of Dec. 30, 1852 (Figure 22). Martha Jane McCulloch, the youngest of William and Margery McCulloch's children, married J.S. Harrison.

### **Documentation and Preservation Efforts**

Spearheaded by the efforts of the Selma Historical Preservation Committee, the Selma Historical Parks Committee, Mayor James Parma, and other city leaders, the Selma Stagecoach Stop building was restored in 2012. Many individuals have contributed enormous efforts to make the project possible, including Jean Heide who compiled an extensive history and genealogy associated with the site, and whose work has laid the foundations of this nomination. The archaeological investigations carried out at the site the Center for Archaeological Research of the University of Texas at San Antonio, also have produced important information regarding the history and use of the property. This nomination is the product of these and many other preservation-minded citizens of Selma, who helped tell this story of the stagecoach and its historical impact on their community.

Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

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Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

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Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

**Geographical Data**

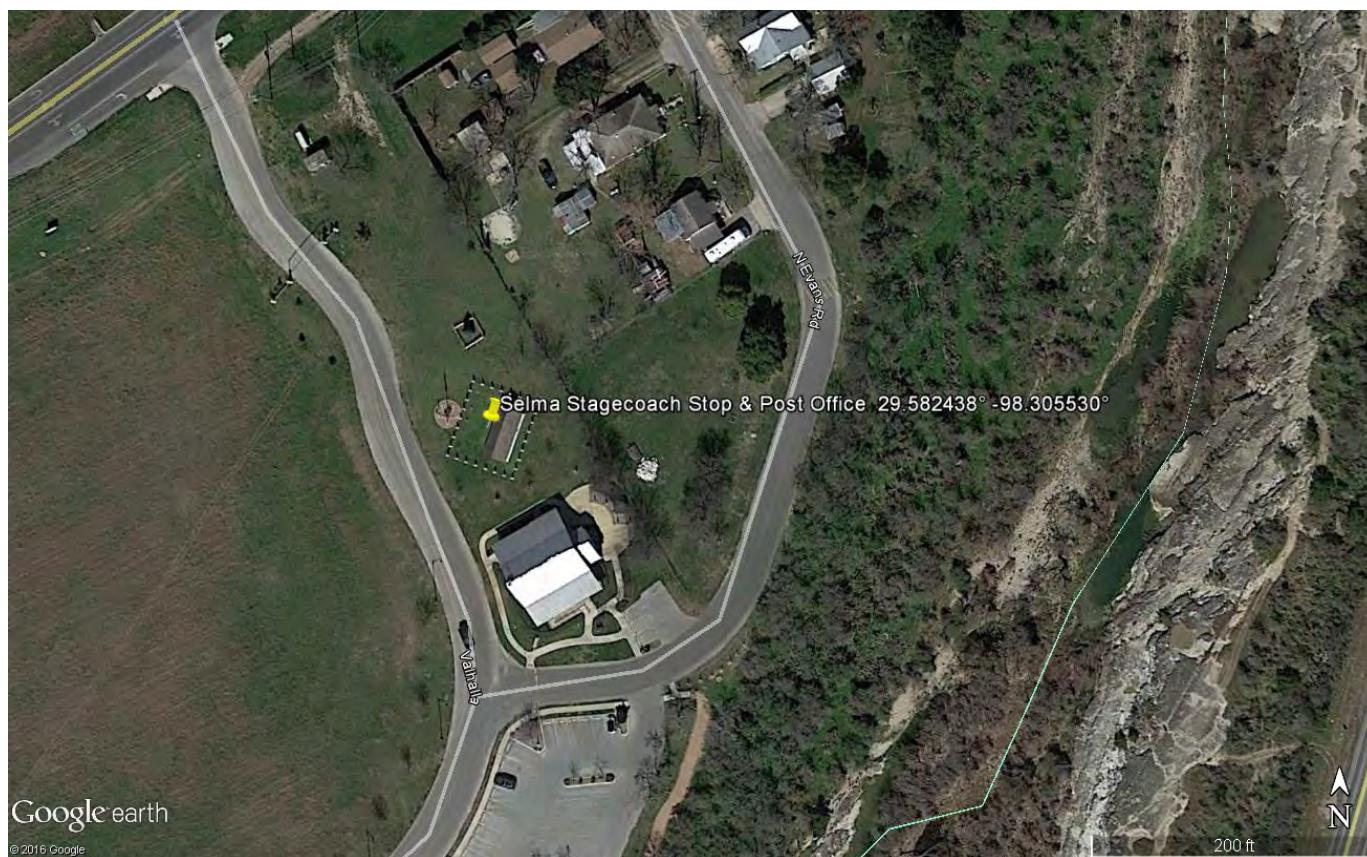
**Acreeage of Property:** less than one acre

**Coordinates**

1. Latitude: 29.582438° Longitude: -98.305530°

**Verbal Boundary Description:** The nominated parcel is a subset of a 10.10-acre parcel owned by the City of Selma, Texas (Property ID 1048054, with the legal description “CB 5046N BLK 1 LOT N IRR 66.6 FT OF 1 STAGE STOP SUBD.”) The nominated property is a rectangular parcel measuring 50 feet by 56 feet (0.065 acres) approximately 155 feet north of the intersection of Valhalla Road and N. Evans Road in Selma, Texas. The nominated building is surrounded by a four-foot-tall decorative iron fence with coursed limestone posts. The fence serves to protect the structure itself and provide a small buffer zone around it.

**Boundary Justification:** The nominated parcel includes the building and its immediate surroundings. It is likely that additional support facilities may have originally extended outside of the fenced area, but archaeological and archival investigations have not determined the extent of the site boundary.



Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

Figure 1. Texas Historical Commission marker adjacent to the Selma Stagecoach and Post Office structure.



Figure 2. The Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office is located on the shaded tract.





Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

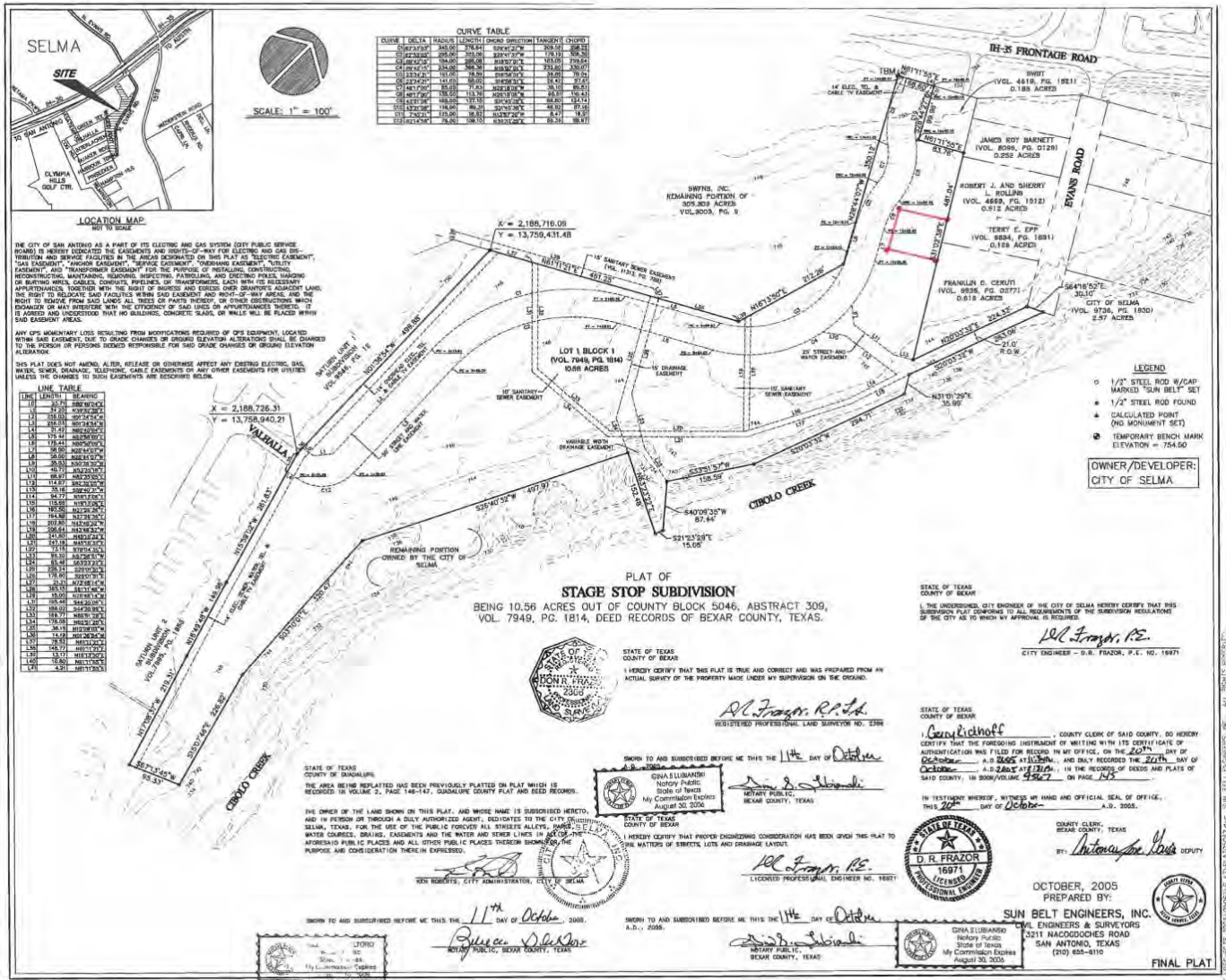
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Figure 3. North elevation of the Stagecoach and Post Office, surrounded by decorative fence.



Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

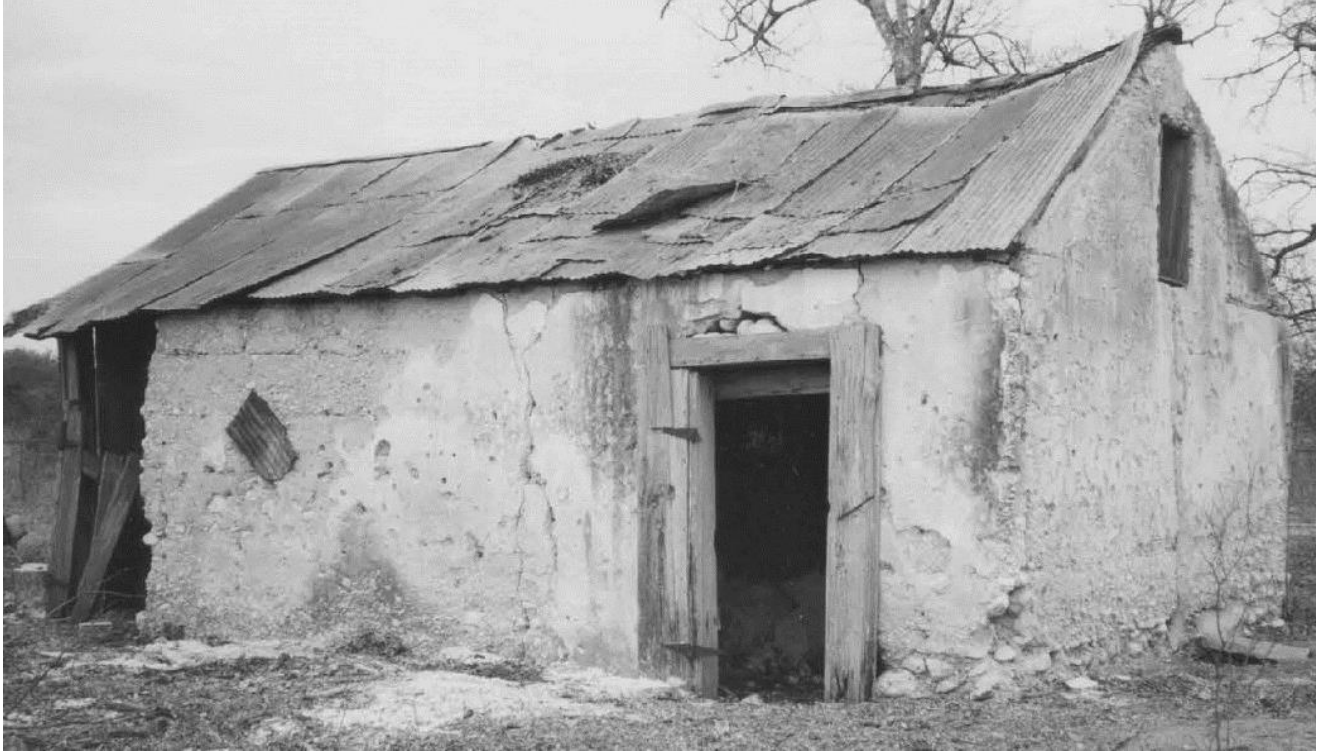
Figure 4. Location of the Selma Stagecoach and Post Office Structure and the fenced-in property (red square), in Selma, Texas.



Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

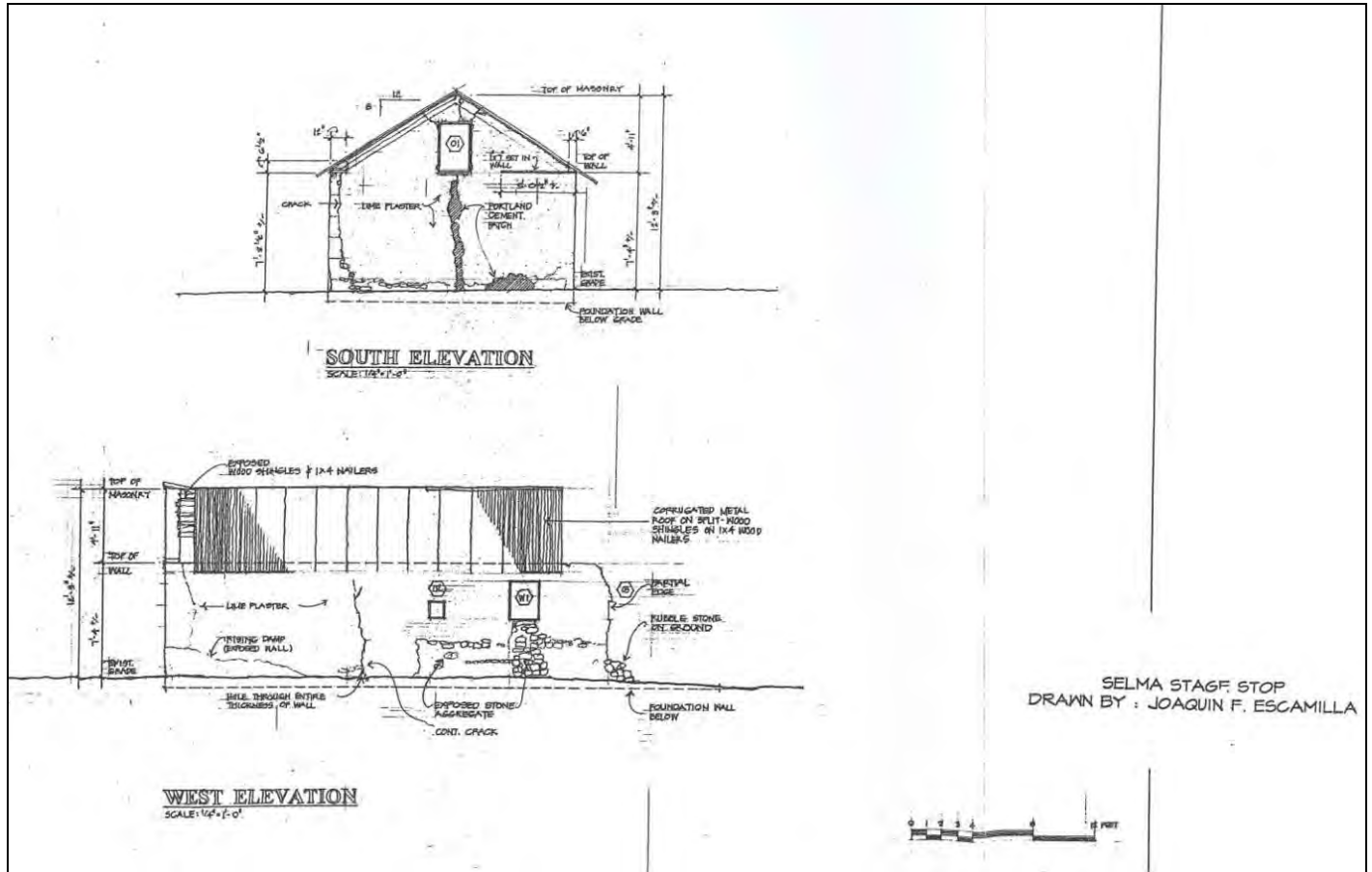
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Figure 5. Pre-restoration photograph of north elevation of building.



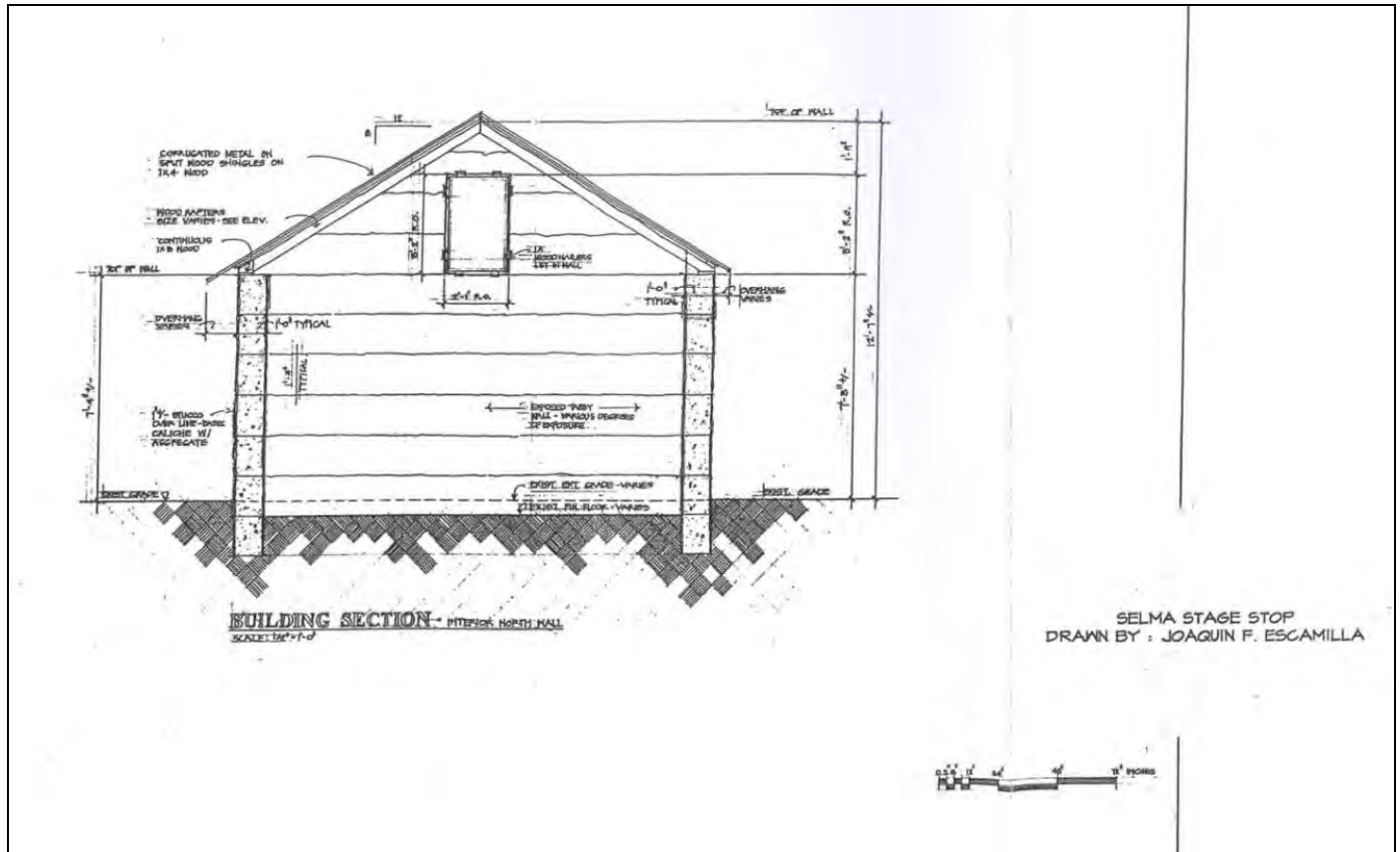
Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

Figure 6. The south and west elevations of the Selma Stagecoach structure prior to rehabilitation.



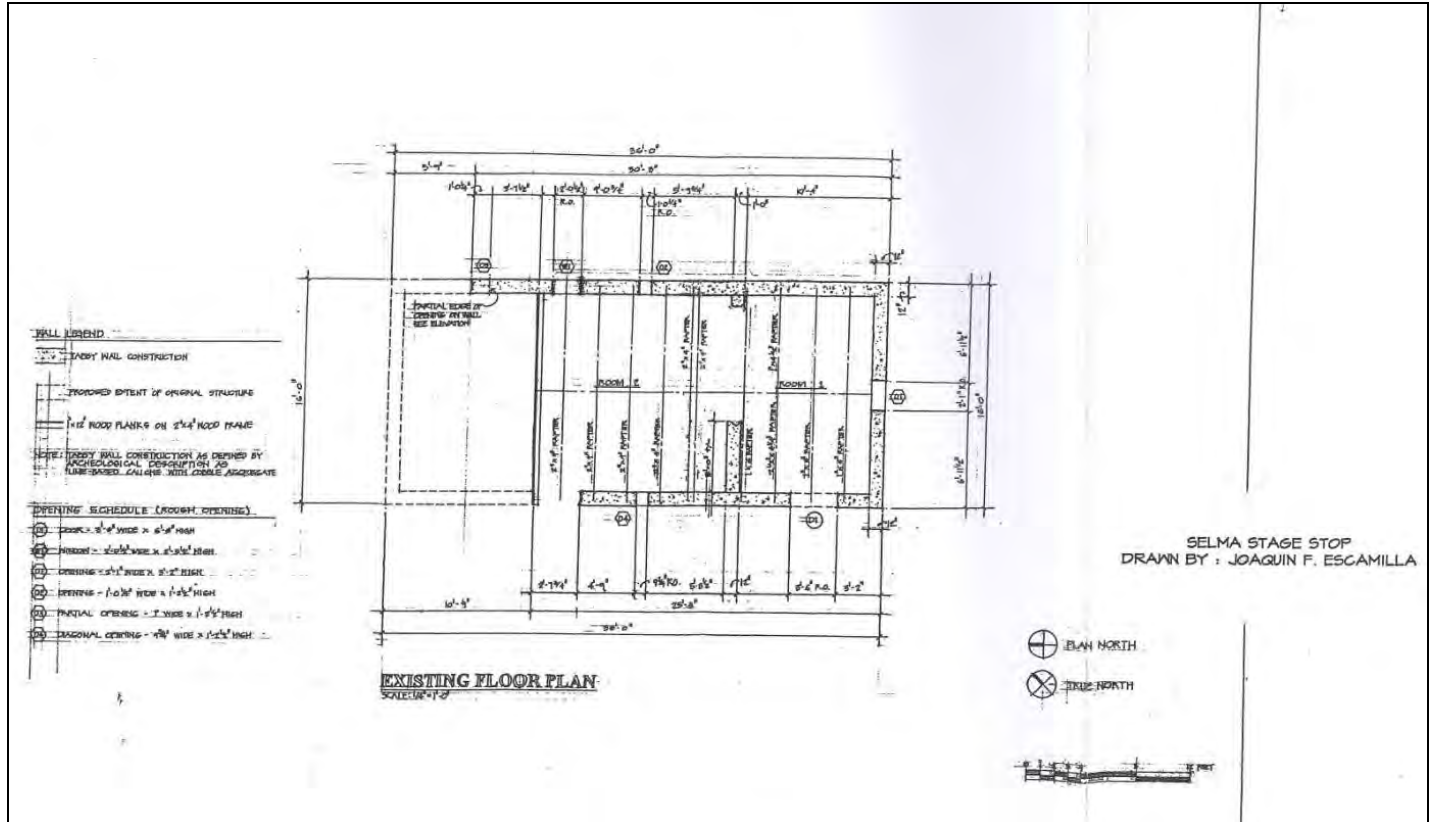
Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

Figure 7. The north elevation of the Selma Stagecoach structure prior to rehabilitation.



Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

Figure 8. The floor plan of the Selma Stagecoach structure prior to rehabilitation.




Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

Figure 9. Newspaper advertisement for the (a) Harrison & McCulloch United States Mail Line of Stages and the (b) Saltmarsh's Line of Mail Stages.

**MISCELLANEOUS.**

**UNITED STATES  
 MAIL LINE OF STAGES  
 FROM  
 Port Lavaca to New Braunfels.**



The subscribers, contractors to carry a weekly mail from Port Lavaca to New Braunfels, via Victoria, Cuero, Gonzales, and Seguin, purposes running a line of four horse stages on the above route.

This line meets the Houston stage at Gonzales, and the Austin and San Antonio line of stages at New Braunfels. By this line travellers can depend upon a direct conveyance to or from any of the above named places.

Leaves Port Lavaca on Friday's, at 6 a. m., and arrives at New Braunfels on Monday's at 4 o'clock, p. m.

Returning, leaves New Braunfels on Saturday's, at 6 a. m., and arrives at Port Lavaca on Tuesday's at 4 p. m.

**RATES.**

Port Lavaca,	E. Clegg, agent.
From Lavaca to Victoria,	\$2 00—
" " to Cuero,	4 00—I. N. North.
" " to Gonzales,	6 00—C. S. Brown.
" " to Seguin,	8 50—J. S. Calvert.
" " N. Braunfels,	10 00—S. Millett.

Every care and attention will be paid to the comfort and convenience of passengers.

**HARRISON & McCULLOCH,**  
 Proprietors.

Victoria, Nov. 9th, 1847.

**SALTMARSH'S  
 LINE OF U. STATES MAIL STAGES.**

**D. A. SALTMARSH & Co., PROPRIETORS.**

*From Indianola to San Antonio, via Lavaca, Victoria, Yorktown, Sulphur Springs and Eclato*



**T**he subscriber takes pleasure in announcing that he has on this line good Troy Coaches, with good teams, and polite drivers—leaving Indianola on the arrival of the steamers from New Orleans, for San Antonio and touching at the above points. The country through which this route passes is one of much beauty and interest to the traveller, (including the Sulphur Springs,) and the roads are good.

For further particulars apply at the stage office, Alhambra Hotel, Indianola.

may24-1y **J. R. FRETWELL, Agent.**

Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

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Figure 10. Example of the Concord Stage Coach used by many stage lines, including the Butterfield Overland Stage.



Figure 11. The so called “mud wagon,” preferred across much of the south where road conditions were often poor and difficult to navigate.






Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

Figure 12. The Port Lavaca to New Braunfels Route of the Harrison and McCulloch Stage Line.

**MISCELLANEOUS.**

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FROM  
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The subscribers, contractors to carry a weekly mail from Port Lavaca to New Braunfels, via Victoria, Cuero, Gonzales, and Seguin, purposes running a line of four horse stages on the above route.

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" " N. Braunfels,	10 00—S. Millett.

Every care and attention will be paid to the comfort and convenience of passengers.

**HARRISON & McCULLOCH,**  
Proprietors.

Victoria, Nov. 9th, 1847.

Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

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Figure 13. Advertisement in the Texian Advocate (Victoria, TX Thursday Oct. 12, 1848) regarding the Victoria Hotel owned by J.S. Harrison.

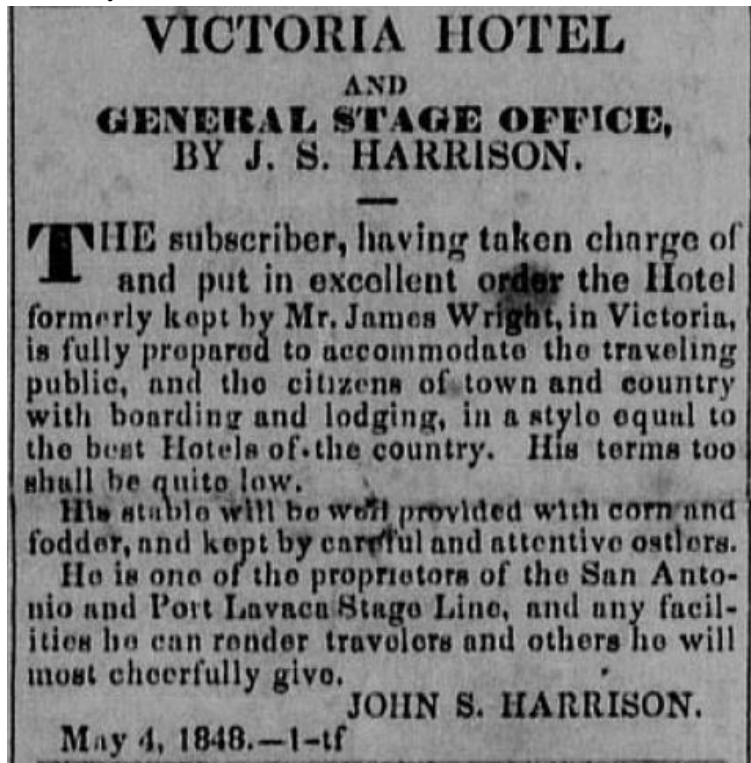
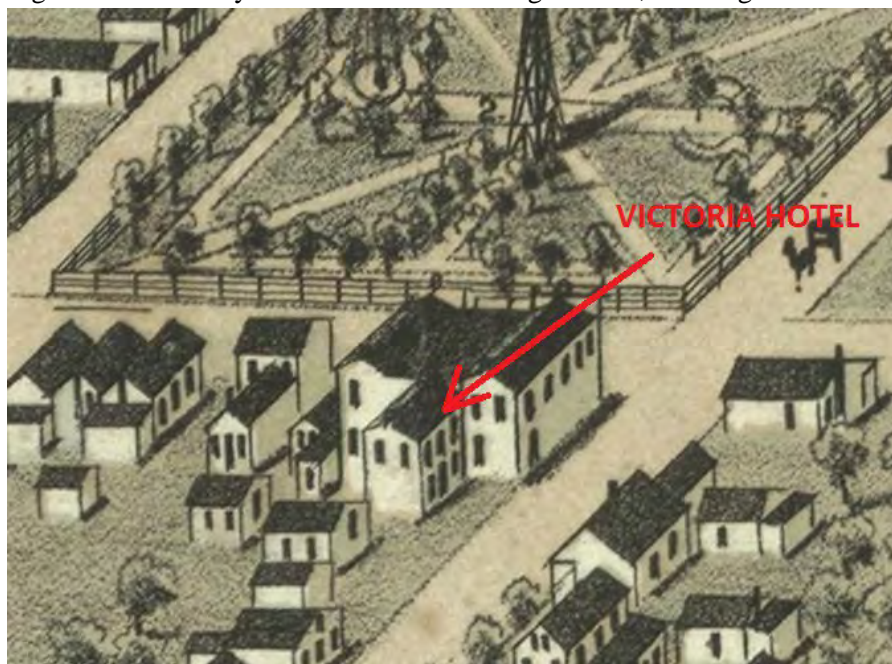


Figure 14. Bird's Eye view of Victoria dating to 1873, showing the intersection of Bridge Street and Forrest Street.



Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

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Figure 15. Advertisement in The Texian Advocate of March 2, 1849 (Volume 3, Number 44).

**VICTORIA HOTEL**  
AND  
**GENERAL STAGE OFFICE,**  
BY S. B. MIXON.

—

**T**HE subscriber, having taken charge of and put in excellent order the Hotel formerly kept by Mr. J. S. Harrison, in Victoria, is fully prepared to accommodate the traveling public, and the citizens of town and country with boarding and lodging, in a style equal to the best Hotels of the country. His terms too shall be quite low.


His stable will be well provided with corn and fodder, and kept by careful and attentive ostlers.

**S. B. MIXON.**

March 2, 1849.—44—tf

Figure 16. Advertisement in The Texian Advocate, December 12, 1849, indicating that the Victoria Hotel had already been sold by J.S. Harrison.

**VICTORIA HOTEL**



—

**T**HE subscriber, having thoroughly repaired and placed in good order, the Hotel formerly kept by Mr. S. B. Mixon, in Victoria, is fully prepared to accommodate the travelling public, and the citizens of town and country with boarding and lodging, in a style equal to the best Hotels of the country. His terms too shall be quite low.

His stable will be well supplied with corn and fodder, and kept by careful and attentive ostlers.

**GEO. W. WRIGHT.**

Nov. 2, 1849—27—6m.

Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

Figure 17. Transcribed copy of the Memorandum of Contract terminating the contract between J.S. Harrison and Caleb Brown.


The State of Texas  
County of Bexar Memorandum of a  
contract made and entered into this 17th day of  
June A.D. 1850 between John S. Harrison of the first part  
and Caleb S. Brown of the second part witnesseth: that  
whereas the said parties have lately been associated as  
partners in conducting a line of Mail Stages from Fort  
Lavaca to New Braunfels in this state and have this day  
dissolved their connection by mutual consent; therefore,  
it is agreed between the parties Harrison and Brown,  
first that the said Harrison shall obtain and deliver up  
to the said Brown a note by the said Brown for five hundred  
dollars and payable to William H. McCulloch- and the said  
Harrison does hereby agree to give the said Brown a deed  
of trust on a negro woman named Judi and her child three  
years old named Tennessee, which deed of trust is made to  
Edward Mallett for the purpose of indemnifying the said  
Brown for any of the partnership debts that the said  
Brown may hereafter have to pay- and the said Brown does  
hereby relinquish and convey to the said Harrison all of  
his right title and interest in and to all the Stages and  
Stage horses on said line, but reserving to himself the  
right to make a choice of one horse on the even part of  
the line and out of the eight horses heretofore belonging  
to the said Brown, and the said Harrison does hereby agree  
to pay and discharge all the partnership debts which the  
said Brown was in any manner liable for under his part-  
nership agreement, and in the event that the said Brown  
is compelled to pay any of the partnership debts by law;  
then the said Harrison does hereby bind himself to pay  
the said Brown all money's so paid out by him. In consid-  
eration of the premises the said Brown agrees to loose  
upon his contract made with Harrison and McCulloch the  
sum of sixteen hundred dollars which amount is to include  
all the money that the said Brown has paid out by way of  
discharging the debts of the firm of Harrison and McCul-  
loch and also of the firm of Harrison and Brown and in-  
cluding also all money paid by the said Brown in purchas-  
ing Stages, horses & etc.  
Signed in duplicate this 17th day of June A.D. 1850.  
John S. Harrison  
C.S. Brown

Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

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Figure 18. Advertisement of the Austin to San Antonio Mail Route of the J.S. Harrison and McCulloch U.S. Mail Stages as it appeared in the San Antonio Ledger, May 1, 1851.

**AUSTIN AND SAN ANTONIO  
TRI-WEEKLY U. S. MAIL STAGES.**



THE Proprietor respectfully informs the travelling public that he has fully organized this Line and is now prepared to carry passengers between Austin and San Antonio. He has provided pleasant and convenient coaches good and fresh teams, and skillful and accommodating drivers. **He will make the trip through in one day.** No visitor to the State should fail to pass over this route as it leads through one of the most beautiful portions of Texas, by way of San Marcos and New Braunfels. This Line connects at Austin with the Line to Houston and that to Gonzales, and at New Braunfels with the Line to La Vaca Bay.

Leaving Austin every *Tuesday, Thursday* and *Saturday* morning, will reach San Antonio the same evening, and returning, will leave San Antonio every *Monday, Wednesday* and *Friday* morning, and arrive at Austin the same evenings.

Fare through \$6. From Austin to San Marcos \$2 50; from San Marcos to New Braunfels \$1 50; from New Braunfels to San Antonio \$2 50.

Capt. A. COLEMAN is agent at San Antonio. Col. DURHAM at San Marcos; and Capt. J. M; W. HALL at Austin. No seat will be considered engaged until the name is registered and the fare paid.

**J. S. HARRISON,**  
July 13. 1850      10:      Proprietor.

Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

Figure 19. Section of the 1876 Rand, McNally and Company Map showing the stage and mail routes of Texas.



Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

Figure 20. Texian Advocate advertisement indicating that the former Harrison & McCulloch Stage Line was now owned by C.R. Jamison and his partners.

**SAN ANTONIO, SEGUIN, GONZALES,  
 VICTORIA AND INDIANOLA**



**TRI-WEEKLY STAGE LINE.**

**T**HE undersigned takes pleasure in returning his thanks to the citizens of San Antonio, Indianola, and the traveling public, for their liberal patronage of his Line, and he feels gratified in stating to the public that he has bought out the Mail Line from Indianola to Brussels, and will run SEMI-WEEKLY from and to the above points. He has superior coaches, fine horses, polite and skilful drivers.

With these inducements, together with a sincere desire to deal candidly and frankly with all those who may patronize his line, he hopes to continue to receive a liberal share of public favor. These stages will run in connection to and from the New Orleans Boats.

**RATES.**

From San Antonio	to Seguin.....	\$3 50
"	" to Gonzales.....	6 50
"	" to Victoria.....	10 00
"	" to Indianola.....	12 00
From Indianola	to Victoria.....	4 00
"	" to Gonzales.....	8 00
"	" to Seguin.....	10 00
"	" to San Antonio.....	12 00

For further information apply to  
 C. R. JAMISON, San Antonio, }  
 J. L. NICKELSON, Victoria, } Agents.  
 J. L. ALLEN, Proprietor, Indianola }

Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

Figure 21. Martha and John S. Harrison around the time they were married.



Figure 22. R.D. McCulloch, older brother of Martha Jane and William H. McCulloch also became involved in the transportation business when he purchased and ran the McCulloch House in Indianola.

**McCULLOCH HOUSE.**  
*Indianola, Texas.*



Having taken the stand lately occupied by Mrs. Eberly, the subscriber designs opening the same on the 1st of June for the accommodation of the traveling community. The HOUSE will undergo thorough repairs; besides, many alterations, additions will be made, with **NEW FURNITURE** throughout. Every attention will be given to ladies and families to make them comfortable. A **BATH HOUSE** is also constructed for the benefit of the boarders.

**R. D. McCULLOCH.**  
Indianola, May 20, 1852. v2-n2 1y



Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 1: Selma Stagecoach Building, looking Southeast.



Photo 2: Selma Stagecoach Building, looking southwest.



Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 3: Selma Stagecoach Building, looking south.



Photo 4: Selma Stagecoach Building, looking northwest.



Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 5: Selma Stagecoach Building, looking east.



Photo 6: Selma Stagecoach Building, looking northeast



Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 7: Selma Stagecoach Building front room immediately inside door, looking south.



Photo 8: Selma Stagecoach Building looking northwest to front of room.



Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 9: Selma Stagecoach Building detail of wall and ceiling construction



Photo 10: Selma Stagecoach Building detail of small second room.



Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

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Photo 11: Selma Stagecoach Building detail of wall construction



*-fin-*



























UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office

Multiple Name:

State & County: TEXAS, Bexar

Date Received: 5/12/2017      Date of Pending List:      Date of 16th Day:      Date of 45th Day: 6/26/2017      Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100001252

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

Accept       Return       Reject      6/26/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office is locally significant under National Register Criterion A in the areas of Transportation and Exploration/Settlement. Completed c. 1850 using the "tabby" (limecrete) construction form, the modest stagecoach stop building represents the typical infrastructure associated with the development of important transportation and communication networks essential to local settlement and growth in isolated rural Texas during the early nineteenth century.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept NR Criterion A

Reviewer Paul Lusignan

Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2229

Date 06/26/2017

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No      see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

**TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
*real places telling real stories*



**TO:** Edson Beall  
 National Register of Historic Places  
 National Park Service  
 1201 Eye Street, NW (2280)  
 Washington, DC 20005

**From:** Mark Wolfe, SHPO  
 Texas Historical Commission

**RE:** Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas

**DATE:** May 10, 2017

The following materials are submitted:

X	Original National Register of Historic Places form on disk. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the National Register of Historic Places nomination of the Selma Stagecoach Stop and Post Office, Selma, Bexar County, Texas
	Resubmitted nomination.
X	Original NRHP signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
	Multiple Property Documentation form on disk.
	Resubmitted form.
	Original MPDF signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
X	CD with TIFF photograph files, KMZ files, and nomination PDF
	Correspondence.

**COMMENTS:**

- SHPO requests substantive review (cover letter from SHPO attached)
- The enclosed owner objections (do ) (do not ) constitute a majority of property owners
- Other:

