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7 DESCRIPTION

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

GENERAL PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF BASTROP

The city of Bastrop in Bastrop County is located in the southeast portion of Central Texas. Situated on a high, relatively flat terrace of the Colorado River, the city is bounded by the river on the west, Piney Creek on the north, the headwaters of Coopers Creek on the east and Gills Branch on the south. At the city's eastern edge stands an isolated pocket of forest known as the "Lost Pines," so named because this tract of loblolly pines appears some eighty miles beyond the western limit of the main pine belt in Texas. This natural resource figured prominently in the early industrial enterprises of Bastrop and a portion of the forest now forms a recreation area, the Bastrop State Park. Located at the edge of three major ecological areas, the Balcones Hill Country, the Blackland Prairie and the Piney Woods, the townsite provided access to all three areas, access to stone resources and ample permanent water. Each of the three areas contains unique plant and animal communities. Early Anglo accounts of the area frequently mention the rich game resources of the area.

Not only did these rich natural resources provide an ideal settlement area, but the area was on the major early transportation and commerce route between San Antonio and Nacogdoches. Blazed in the late 17th century, this route, the Camino Real, connected Spanish colonies in Mexico with the missions in East Texas. The original townsite of Bastrop was platted just above the crossing of the Camino Real and the Colorado River. A significant factor in the settlement of this site, the road remained a major route in the 18th and 19th centuries.

DENSITY & TYPES OF BUILDINGS NOMINATED

Established along this Colorado River crossing of the Camino Real, Bastrop became one of the few Texas towns founded during Mexican rule. Based upon the stipulations of the Spanish Law of the Indies, the form of the city was laid out in a grid pattern with the Constitutional Square as the town nucleus. Bastrop's county courthouse and old jail now stand on that public square first set aside in 1832. Almost all the historic and architectural resources within the city limits of Bastrop are located near this central core of the city. With only a few exceptions, the identified sites are situated to the east of the Colorado River, to the south and west of the railroad tracts and to the north of Highway 71. A few other sites are sprinkled outside these boundaries, but within the city limits. Most of Bastrop's limited growth has been contained within this specific area and despite the fact that there are a large number of historic and architectural sites in the city, they are interspersed with modern housing so that they lack the cohesion of historic districts.

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However, the downtown commercial district represents the most intact concentration of late 19th century architecture. Forming an obvious historic district, the Bastrop Commercial District includes the Victo# rian commercial buildings in the 900 and 1000 blocks of Main St., as well as two commercial buildings at the southeast corner of Pine and Main (800 block). Adjacent to the commercial buildings and forming the boundary edges are two houses at the south end of the district along the 800 block of Main and a church along Church St. at the northwest corner of the district.

To the west and south of the courthouse are a number of modest one-story, 19th century houses, principally Victorian cottages. The larger, more elegant Greek Revival, Victorian and early 20th century houses are scattered throughout the northern portion of the city.

131 of the 146 historical & architectural properties surveyed, are being nominated to the National Register. The vast majority of these buildings are private residences. Other than private residences the nominated structures include 25 commercial buildings, which form an historic district, 2 recreation halls, 1 bridge, 1 depot, 2 public buildings (courthouse & jail), and 3 churches.

ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF BASTROP

Architecture in the city of Bastrop offers a visual history reflecting the forces, events, and people which give the State of Texas its special character. This character is the result of the strong influence of the cultural origins of the builders. Bastrop, being located on the most important transportation and communication link in early Texas, the Camino Real, between San Antonio and Nacogdoches, shows a cross section of the development of architecture in the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth century Texas.

None of the building accomplished during the Spanish period in Bastrop remains, for instead of settling colonists, Spain sent soldiers and missionaries and their control was short-lived. As a result of the immigration of families from the United States, the Anglo-American element of the population became dominant before the mid-nineteenth century in Texas. This domination is shown in the predominance of the "Anglo-American" influence in the architecture of Bastrop. Although the majority of the population increase in Texas was due to immigration from the United States, various European colonists came into Texas at this time. Of the Europeans, the Germans were the largest in number, and their influence is apparent in Bastrop as well.

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The majority of the house types found in Texas during the frontier settlement period are the double log house and the frame house of the Anglo-American settlers. These styles are exemplified in Bastrop by the Jenkins House (42) at 1710 Main and the Campbell Taylor (Greenlief Fisk) House (84) at 1005 Hill. The Jenkins House shows a typical "historic layering" or progression of a residence from a single-room log cabin (1830) to a two-room log cabin with dog-trot between rooms (1836). A kitchen and dining "ell" was added (1850) and then finally the house was sided with clapboard, the dog-trot enclosed as a central hall, and a full-length porch with decorative detail was added to create its present Victorian appearance: (1880). (c.) The early Texas frame house is typified by the Campbell Taylor House with its heavy skeleton cage of square-hewn logs, a building method stemming from medieval England. The plan of the frame house was the same as the double log house. The ridge of the gable roof parallels the front of the house which faces south. The present building has been altered such that the front gallery is enchosed and the entry is now on the west. The influence of the German immigrants is shown in the Kohler House at 1901 Pecan. The proportions are different from the other pioneer houses. It is two rooms deep rather than one room deep, emphasizing the breadth rather than the depth. Due to the Texas climate, the German immigrant adapted the front gallery of the Anglo-American house, but the proportions are easily distinguishable as German.

Following the pioneer period of development, the ante-bellum house in Texas was predominantly of the Greek Revival style. There are several fine examples of this style in Bastrop, one of which is the Brooks-Wilbarger House (?) at 1403 Main. A simple two-story portico frames the first and second-floor central doors. The transition from the pioneer Texas house to the Greek Revival was an easy one. The symmetrical alignment of windows to either side of the central door, the columned porch and symmetrical plans were already established as the building pattern. The change was primarily one of size, proportion, and detail. The Greek Revival house was larger, more horizontal, and had classical detailing.

After the Civil War the railroad became important to Bastrop as well as the rest of Texas. This provided facilities to transport more cotton, lumber, cattle, and coal, all of which Bastrop was rich in, bringing not only an increase in wealth but also better communication. With the appearance of the railroad, the styles in Texas were immediately affected by the cultural influences in the East. Pressed-metal ornament adorns the commercial Victorian buildings such as the Elzner building (112) much the same as it did in the East. The exuberant Victorian

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style coincided with the newly established society and expressed its increased wealth, pride, and ambition. This exuberance is expressed in the big gabled and turreted residences such as the Orgain house (37) at 1508 Church St. The Orgain house is distinguished by its "picturesque" composition in its elaborate detail and irregular plan. The roof line is broken up with irregular gables, dormers, and chimneys. Innovations such as the attached kitchen near the dining room and plumbing and heating were introduced at this time. Elaboration of detail was expressed in balusters, valance, and brackets.

In the first decades of the twentieth century the Victorian house was still the predominant building style, but a few of the more modern styles were being built. The Powell C. Maynard house (5) at 1408 Pecan shows the influence of the Prairie style form of the mid-west on the Texas residence. It was a radical departure from the Victorian, with its wide eaves, horizontal emphasis, low hipped roof and heavy square cloumns. Another popular mode of expression in the early 20th century was the Classical Rivival style. Bastrop has a few examples such as the Elbert S. Orgain House (43) at 1704 Main, which displays the two-story fluted Doric columns, corner pilasters, classical frieze and Palladian window.

The small town of Bastrop reflects the full range of development in architectural styles in Texas in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, from pioneer to Greek Revival to Victorian and finally the early twentieth century Classical Revival style and Prairie-influenced houses.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

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An initial survey had been conducted by the Texas Historical Commission staff in 1970 identifying those sites of major architectural significance. With the assistance of the state staff, the county historical Commission added a number of historical and architectural resources to the inventory in 1975. In 1976 & 1977 the Texas Historical Commission conducted a more comprehensive survey investigating those sites added by the county commission and including a broader survey of architectural and historical sites. Mike Yancey and Stanley Klein, architectural surveyors, and Marie D. Landon, historian, conducted the comprehensive survey. The entire area within the city limits of Bastrop was surveyed for historical and architectural properties.

The survey of Bastrop was intended as a broad identification and documentation of the cultural resources located within the city limits

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of Bastrop. The purpose of the survey was to get a thorough knowledge of the city's historic resources. After the properties were recorded we evaluated them based upon the criteria set forth by the National Register. The evaluation procedure assigned points to each property based on an assessment of historical significance, architectural quality, importance to a district and unsympathetic modifications. The numerical scale used was as follows:

<u>Historical significance</u> Outstanding 25; Notable 20; Moderate 15; Minor 5

Architectural significance Exceptional 25; Excellent 20; Good 15; Fair 5

<u>Importance to a district</u> Contributing 10; Compatible 5

<u>Unsympathetic modifications</u> Little or none 10; Moderate 5; Considerable 0

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

One of the oldest cities in Texas, Bastrop was founded at the Colorado River crossing of the Camino Real between San Antonio and Nacogdoches. Settled briefly during the Spanish Colonial period, Bastrop was later colonized by Stephen F. Austin as the focal point of his "Little Colony," established in 1830. Bastrop has produced a governor, lieutenant-governor, a Congressman, numerous educators and other local citizens with notable public careers. In the education walm the city assumed a prominent role with the establishment of the Bastrop Academy in 1851 and the Bastrop Military Institute in 1858. In addition, because the city's growth has remained relatively stable over the years from 1880 (1,546) to 1900 (2,145) to 1970 (3,343), Bastrop contains a wide range of architectural styles dating from the pioneer settlement through early 20th century examples.

Important to Bastrop's beginnings was the Camino Real, between San Antonio and Nacogdoches, first blazed in 1691 by Domingo Teran de los Rios. As the first provisional governor of Texas, Teran provided a route from Monclova, Mexico, to the Spanish missions established in East Texas in 1690. Eventually stretching across Texas from San Juan Bautista on the Rio Grande River, crossing the Colorado River in present-day Bastrop County, and continuing to Sabine River, this Camino Real was the first organized means of transportation and influenced settlement patterns in Texas. This road marked the beginning of continuous activity through Bastrop County. The first recorded settlement at the Colorado River crossing at what is now Bastrop, was a stockade known as Puesto del Colorado established there by the Spanish in 1805.

The most significant event in the permanent settlement of the area was the colonization efforts by Stephen F. Austin in 1827. After meeting with reasonable success in settling several hundred Anglo families in his first grant between the lower Brazos and Colorado Rivers, Austin petitioned the governor of Coahuila y Texas for permission to settle another colony in a small area east of the Colorado River and north of the Camino Real. In his petition Austin said he had been solicited by several inhabitants of Bexar (San Antonio) to settle families on the border of the Colorado River where the river is crossed by the Old San Antonio Road in order to provide facilities for travelers and to penetrate with new settlement further into the interior of Texas as protection against the Indians. This grant of territory included within Stephen F. Austin's contract of 1827 was

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known as "The Little Colony."

Austin surveyed the district comprising his colony and named it Mina, in honor of one of Mexico's tragic heroes. Upon completing the settlement terms of the contract, Miguel Arciniega, commissioner for the distribution of land in Austin's colonies, gave Mina settlers official title to their land.

The form that the community of Mina took was based on provisions of the Spanish Laws of the Indies (Leyes de Las Indias). The area, geometrical design and use of spaces were stipulated. Mina was designated four square leagues for a town tract. The streets were to be straight, running due north and south, east and west, and 20 varas (60 feet) wide. In the center of town a square measuring 120 varas on each side was set aside as Principal or Constitutional square.

Surrounding this nucleus were square blocks each with designated functions. The west block was set aside for municipal buildings, the east for the church, the north for the jail and the south and southwest were designated for educational buildings. Finally, the block outside the limits of the town and on the northeast was designated for a cemetery. Although very little of this arrangement of functions is evident in the town today, Bastrop has a unique heritage in that it is one of the few Texas cities founded during this period of Mexican rule. The only other permanent Texas cities established at this time were Liberty (1831), Gonzales (1832) and Victoria (1832).

With the increase in population of the area, there was a need for closer government and supervision to give colonists more protection. Thus, the creation of the Municipality of Mina was officially authorized on April 24, 1834.

During difficulties with the Mexican Government which eventually led to the Texas Revolution, Mina citizens took an active role. Mina colonists formed the first Committee of Safety and Correspondence in May 1835, originally to organize for protection against Indians. Within the next few weeks, similar organizations were formed at other Texas cities. Due to the fact that much of the opposition to Mexico was initiated in Mina, it was labeled as the "Cradle of Texas Independence." After the fall of the Alamo in March 1836, citizens of Mina, fearing the advance of the Mexican Army, fled their homes. A detachment of Santa Anna's army was sent to Mina and the soldiers confiscated food, clothing, and destroyed much of the town. Known as the "Runaway Scape," the flight of the Anglo settlers continued until news of the Texas victory at the Battle of San Jacinto. The people began to drift back

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into the little town by May, while the Mexican army was retreating toward the Rio Grande.

Before the founding of Austin (1839) Mina (Bastrop) was the uppermost settlement of any consequence along the Colorado River and because of its exposed position was subject to frequent Indian raids. In order to defend themselves, the citizens built a log stockade in the center of town where the county courthouse now stands to provide a refuge in the event of a mass attack by Indians. Although the Indians had been a constant threat to colonists since the first settlements in 1828, depredations reached their peak during the Texas Revolution. As settlers returned to Mina following the "Runaway Scape" there was little protection from the Indian raids.

Finally after an attack in early July 1836, Capt. Jesse Billingsley of Bastrop and men from his company returned to Bastrop to help defend the returning settlers. The company served in the Bastrop area until being discharged on November 20.

By fall of 1836 Bastrop receiving additional protection from Fort Colorado, further up the river and further north from Little River They provided adequate defense for this area until their dis-Fort. bandment in the spring of 1838. However, difficulties with Indians continued and Bastrop took the unusual step of organizing a local ranging company to be paid with public funds. A government ranging company soon came to their assistance and defended the area from March to July, 1839, but the group supplemented by volunteers of Bastrop County and city. The volunteers were led by Edward Burleson. His Bastrop County home was the headquarters of the army. After this there was no army stationed in the area and protection depended on volunteers. Severe defeats inflicted upon the Comanche bands in the summer and fall of 1840 lessened the Indian menace and by 1841 Bastrop was relatively The frontier had moved westward and northward and secure from attack. the Indians never posed as great a threat as they did in the early days of the Republic.

With the establishment of the new Republic of Texas, counties were established, as opposed to Mexican system of municipalities. The County of Mina was officially created in 1836 and organized in 1837 under the new name of Bastrop with the City of Bastrop as the county seat. One ot the 23 original counties of the Republic of Texas, Bastrop County then included all or parts of 15 present-day counties. The creation of Lee County in 1874 marked the last boundary change and reduced Bastrop County to its present size.

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Although the original grant in 1830 to the new colonists, designated the area as Bastrop, later decrees named the area Mina. However, in 1837 the county and city name were changed back to Bastrop to honor Felipe Enrique Neri, Baron of Bastrop. Bastrop was perhaps the single most influential person in aiding the settlement of Anglo-Americans in Texas. His influence enabled Moses Austin to secure the grant to land from the Mexican government and he served as the intermediary with the Mexican Government for Stephen F. Austin in colonizing his grants. As a representative to the legislature of the newly-created state of Coahuila and Texas, from 1824 until his death in 1827, Bastrop sought legislation favorable to the cause of immigration.

Bastrop was considered as the site for the new capital of the Republic of Texas. In January 1839 President Mirabeau B. Lamar establiched a commission to locate the capital of Texas. The two choices of the commission were Bastrop and Waterloo (Austin), of which the latter was chosen.

The stagecoach made its appearance in the 1840's. The main route through Bastrop was the stage line from Houston to Austin, but routes existed between Bastrop and all the major cities in the area. When the stagecoach stopped in Bastrop, travelers invariably stopped at either the Nicholson House or the Campbell Taylor House, Built by James Nicholson ca. 1840, on Wilson St. in Bastrop, the Nicholson House, later known as the Nicholson Hotel, was enlarged to accommodate travelers and became widely known for its excellent food and lodgings. Its noted guests included Gen. Sam Houston, whose son was a student at the Bastrop Military Academy; William Bollaert, world traveler and scientist; and Amelia Barr, writer. In later years the house was used as a boarding house until it finally burned in 1899. Built ca. 1836 the Campbell Taylor house (84), which still stands at 1005 Hill St., is the earliest structure remaining in the city. It was the home of Jesse Halderman and Campbell Taylor, both veterans of the Battle of San Jacinto. Located on the Camino Real, the house served as another frequent stop for travelers.

Attempts to make the Colorado River navigable in the 19th century proved unsuccessful and generally only small boats and rafts were able to negotiate the river. Ferries were used as early as 1834 to provide access for transporting travelers and goods across the Colorado River. During the 1880's iron bridges were constructed across Cedar Creek (1881), Piney Creek (1880's) and the Colorado River (1889), providing the first permanent structures across these waterways. The Piney Creek Bridge (30) still remains.

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The railroad provided the greatest impetus to Bastrop's growth in the 19th century. The Houston and Texas Central Railroad organized April 3, 1862 and constructed 351 miles, included a line through Bastrop County. The Colorado and Post Oak Island Railway connected Bastrop to this line in 1871. By 1887 the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railway Company connected Bastrop and Taylor and the MKT freight depot (85) is located at the conjunction of the MKT lines and Chestnut St.

Beginning in the mid-19th century, Bastrop citizens placed a high premium on education. In 1851 the Bastrop Academy, a coeducational school under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, opened its first session with 132 students. A large, two-story building with a double gallery had been erected across from the Methodist Church. On each floor there was an auditorium used as a study hall (upper hall for girls and lower one for boys). The building also contained a library and music room. The Academy operated through 1857. In 1858 the Bastrop Military Institute was incorporated and occupied the Old Academy Building. Under the direction of Colonel R. T. P. Allen, formerly the superintendent of the Kentucky Military Institute, the school became well-known throughout Texas and the South. Colonel Allen's house (38) was built adjacent to the Academy and remains as one of the city's finest examples of the Greek Revival style. During the first year of operation, the Institute occupied the first floor, while Rev. Henry Carmer and his wife, original teachers of the Academy retained the upper story as the girls' school, but this school ended within a year. The Bastrop Military Institute had two divisions -- preparatory and collegiate. Among its cadets were J. D. Sayers, leter governor of Texas, and his brother, W. B. Sayers, as well as Sam Houston, Jr. In 1860 J. D. Sayers was the first person to graduate from the Institute with a Bachelor of Arts Degree.

The Institute closed during the Civil War and Colonel Allen later returned to the Kentucky Military Institute. In 1867 the school reopened under the superintendency of Major J. G. James, but due to a lack of patronage the school was moved to Austin in June 1870 and operated under the name of Texas Military Institute until 1879.

A number of other private schools flourished in Bastrop during the 1860's and 1870's. In 1870, William McKay opened the Excelsior College in the Academy Building and operated the school there until 1872 when the property was sold to the Bastrop public school system. The old Academy Building was probably demolished in 1892. As early as 1860 Mrs. S. J. Orgain opened the Colorado Institute in Bastrop and conducted it for 35 years. The school was attended by students from all over the country and maintained a high attendance even during the Civil War. The

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Academy School, Casino School, Colorado Institute, Bastrop Turnverein Association School, German-American School, Excelsior College, Masonic Institute and the Central Texas Normal Adademy were the most prominent schools until about 1883. After this the private institution began to decline and the public school was established as the predominant education system.

Macedonia Baptist Church, founded in 1874 as the first Black Baptist church in Bastrop, also housed the first school for Black children. In 1891 Emile School was built on Marion Street and the two-story frame Victorian schoolhouse served the Black community until 1945 when the building was replaced by a new structure on the same site.

Education was a natural outgrowth of an interest in cultural matters. The first library was founded as early as 1852 by the Ladies Reading Circle. For that period this library was the only one of its size and scope in the state. This library served the needs of the county until 1900 when the Bastrop Public Library was organized with Mrs. S. J. Orgain as the first President and Mrs. E. H. Jenkins as secretary.

One of the county's oldest cultural centers was the Casino (29), which housed one of Bastrop's early schools and much of the town's entertainment. The 1-story brick building erected in 1848 still stands at the corner of Farm and Fayette. The Casino was an incorporated institution organized by the Casino Association in 1867 for the purposes of "education, benevolences, morals, and encouragement of scientific and literary pursuits." Since it was the cultural center of Bastrop, almost every citizen in Bastrop maintained a membership. Concerts, banquets, stage plays, and all forms of cultural diversions were performed in the Old Casino. The building and accompanying acreage were sold on Oct. 25, 1891, to the German-American School Association.

By 1890 the Bastrop Opera House began to predominate as the center for entertainment. Featuring operas, concert artists, home talents and benefits, the Victorian building was constructed in 1889 by Dave Green and P. O. Elzner for \$15,000. After a series of owners, the building was sold in 1909 and became known as the Arion Opera House. In 1913 the building was again sold and converted into the Strand Theater to accommodate the beginning of the movie films. Finally, the Bastrop Youth Organization bought the old opera house in 1950 and used the building for many years as a teenage activity center, known as the Teen Tower. The building (114) presently stands vacant at 709 Spring Street.

Seeing the need for a building to serve the community activities of Blacks, Beverly and Lula Kerr, music teachers and prominent Black

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leaders in Bastrop, built the Kerr Community Center (89) in 1914 at 1308 Walnut and rented the facility for social activities, lodge meetings, etc. The building was erected just behind their house which still stands at 1305 Pine (87). During World War II the army renovated and refurnished the building to use as a USO center. After the Kerrs' deaths, the Kerr Community Center took over ownership of the building, which continues to function as a social center for Blacks and houses "Community Action" on the first floor.

Bastrop County's economy has always been based primarily on agriculture, but a few industrial enterprises have operated in Bastrop. The earliest natural resource utilized commercially was lumber. The county is distinguished by the Lost Pines of Texas, a small isolated tract of loblolly pines which are located some eighty miles west of the western limit of the main pine belt in Texas. These pines are durable and they found a ready market for new construction west of Bastrop. Pine lumber from this area was used in Austin's first State Capitol and in the French Embassy in Austin. The earliest incorporated industry was the Bastrop Steam Mill, Incorporated, established by the Congress of Texas in 1838 with Henry Crocheron, R.S. Reding, R.B. Craft, W.P. Hill and Robert G. Hill as the directors. Bastrop quickly became the seat of the lumber mills from which nearly all pine in the west and central Texas was supplied. Early mills advertised were those of A.W. Tunnard, Sims and Smith, and Fred and Jacob Steussy.

Another major industry was cotton. In 1874 the Bastrop Cotton and Wool Manufacturing Company was formed for the purpose of manufacturing cotton and woolen fabrics.

The diversity of activities and institutions in Bastrop's history Sharacterizes the enthusiasm and energy of the community's citizens. Listed below are a few of the leaders that helped establish and develop the town.

JUDGE R. L. BATTS

Judge R. L. Batts, son of Andrew Jackson and Julis Rice Batts, was born in Bastrop, Texas, November 1, 1864. He received his preparatory education in Excelsior College, Bastrop, and, in 1886, his law degree from The University of Texas. Immediately after graduation, he began the practice of law in Bastrop. In 1889, he was married to Miss Harriet Boak of Austin. Judge Batts was appointed in 1891 to the office of assistant attorney general of Texas. In 1893 he was made professor of law at the University of Texas, but he returned to private practice in 1901 and practiced in Austin until 1914, when he was made special assistant attorney general of the United States. In 1917 President

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Woodrow Wilson appointed him judge of the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. In 1919 he resigned to become general counsel of the Gulf Petroleum Company. In 1927 Judge Batts was appointed to the board of regents of the University of Texas and served as its chairman from 1930 to 1933. Invaddition, Batts was the author of several legal texts. He died in Austin in 1935. The Batts' house (71) is at 609 Pecan St.

JESSE BILLINGSLEY

CONTINUATION SHEET

A native of Tennessee, Jesse Billingsley settled at Cedar Creek near Bastrop in 1834. He was a member of and credited with organizing the Mina Volunteers in 1835 and later became their captain under the command of General Burleson in the Texas army.Under General Sam Houston on February 28, 1836, this company participated in several engagements in the Texas Revolution including the Battle of San Jacinto. He represented Bastrop County in the First and Second Congress of the Texas Republic as a member of the Constitutional Convention of the Republic of Texas. In 1838 he assumed the command of a Ranging Company designed to oppose in Indians. When General Woll invaded Texas in 1842, he joined the expedition against them also. After Texas became a state he represented Bastrop County in the Senate of the 5th, 6th and 8th Legislatures.

JOHN WHEELER BUNTON

John Bunton was born on February 22, 1807 in Sumner County, Tennessee and came to Mina in 1835. He settled first at San Felipe before residing in Mina where he joined Captain Coleman's Rangers. He, T.J. Gazley, and Captain Coleman were elected to represent Mina in the Constitutional Convention of 1836 and all were signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence. Upon leaving the convention he came home and immediately rejoined the army by becoming a member of Captain Jesse Billingsley's Mina Volunteers and participated in the Battle of San Jacinto. From October 3 to December 21, 1836, he represented Bastrop County in the First Congress.

EDWARD BURLESON

Born in 1793 in North Carolins, Burleson moved to Texas in 1830. In 1831 he received title to a league of land in Stephen F. Austin's colony in Bastrop County and he built a home below present-day Bastrop. Active in the military events of the Texas Revolution, Burleson was elected to the rank of Colonel of the First Regiment of Texas Volunteers and commanded that group at San Jacinto. In 1837 he was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General of the militia and in 1838 he was appointed Colonel of the First Regiment of the infantry of the regular army. Burleson was a member of the House of Representatives from Bastrop

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County in the Second Congress, 1837-1838, and a member of the Senate in the Third Congress, 1838-39. After moving from Bastrop County, Burleson continued active in political affairs, being elected to the office of Vice-President of the Republic of Texas in 1841.

HENRY CROCHERON

Born on Staten Island, New York, and later moved to Alabama, Henry Crocheron came to Bastrop County in 1837. He opened a merchandising business in Bastrop with L.C. Cunningham as his partner and during the Civil War he engaged in business in Matamoros, selling and shipping cotton to England from the Mexican port of Boca del Rio and received English merchandise to send to Bastrop. He was also one of the founders of the Bastrop Steam Mill, Incorporated, in 1838, Bastrop's first industiral enterprise. Crocheran's two-story Greek Revival house (50) is located at 1502 Wilson.

DR. C. A. GRIMES

Dr. C. A. Grimes was the first Black doctor in Bastrop. Educated at Meharny in Nashville, Tennessee, Dr. Grimes met Laura Madison, a Bastrop student at Fisk. After receiving his M.D. Dr. Grimes moved to Bastrop and later married Laura Madison, who taught at Emile school in Bastrop. Grimes practiced medicine in Bastrop for over 30 years. The house (86) he built for his bride in the 1890's still stands at 1201 Farm.

J. J. HAMILTON

Jeremiah Hamilton was another prominent Black politician from Bastrop. Born in Tennessee in 1839, Hamilton became distinguished as one of the first Black legislators in Texas. In the 1869 state elections, the first election in which Blacks were allowed to vote in Texas, Hamilton was one of 11 Black men elected to serve in the 12th Legislative session. Elected to serve from Bastrop's district to the State House of Representatives in 1870, Hamilton also served as a delegate to the State Republican Convention in 1873 and was a delegate to the National Colored Convention. In 1878 he was a candidate of the Greenback Party, an agrarian interest party active in Texas from 1876 to about 1884.

MRS. EMMA HOLMES JENKINS

Mrs. Jenkins originally came to Texas as the music teacher at Hill's Prairie in Bastrop County. She was married in 1881 to James Jenkins. In 1889 Mrs. Jenkins became principal of Bastrop School and served as superintendent for a short time. She had a continuous career as a teacher in the Bastrop School for over 50 years. Mrs. Jenkins organized and conducted a teacher's normal school in Bastrop and was the first woman conductor of a normal school in Texas.

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JOHN HOLLAND JENKINS

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Born in Alabama in 1822, Jenkins came to Texas with his parents in 1828 and settled in Bastrop County. Among the earliest settlers in Bastrop, Jenkins fought in the Texas War for Independence, Indian Wars, the Mexican War and the Civil War. After the Civil War William Edwards Jenkins, John Holland's son, served as Sheriff of Bastrop County for many years, with his younger brothers Holland and Joe as deputies. In the 1880's Emma Holmes Jenkins collected the writings of John Holland Jenkins, which were published finally by the University of Texas Press in 1958 as <u>Recollections of Early Texas</u>, edited by John H. Jenkins III, with an introduction by J. Frank Dobie. Jenkins' residence (42) is located at 1710 Main Street.

GEORGE WASHINGTON JONES

Born in Marion County, Alabama in 1828, George Washington Jones settled in Bastrop in 1848. He studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1851. After a few years of law practice in Bastrop, he was elected district attorney in 1856. With the opening of the Civil War, Jones enlisted in the Confederate Army as a private but was soon promoted to the rank of colonel in the 17th Texas Infantry. At the close of the war he resumed the practice of law at Bastrop and was elected a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1866. In that year he was elected lieutenant governor of Texas, but was removed in 1867 by General P.H. Sheridan as "an impediment to reconstruction." He was a candidate for governor on the Greenback ticket in 1882. Serving on this ticket Jones was elected to the United States Congress in the 46th and 47th Congresses, 1879-1887. Jones' homestead (91) is a story and one-half frame residence in a rural setting at what was planned as the conjunction of Fayette and Mill Street.

JOE JUNG

Joe Jung immigrated with his parents to Bastrop from Germany. He served as the tax collector in Bastrop in the late 1860's, sheriff of Bastrop from 1869-1872 and County Judge from 1874-76. He later had a mercantile business as a pertner in the Hasler-Jung store, the largest one in Bastrop at the time. As a sideline he also ran the Hasler Mortuary and furnished coffins. Members of the Jung family ran a brickyard and made the first bricks used in Bastrop buildings. The brick houses of Joe Jung and his brother Adolph still remain in Bastrop. Joe's house is at 909 Pecan Street (62) and Adolph's residence is at 508 Pecan (52).

LULA KERR

Lula Kerr was the first Black music teacher in Bastrop. Educated // at Strait University in New Orleans, she came from Huntsville in 1886

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to teach school in Bastrop. That same year she married Beverly Kerr, a barber, as well as a band and orchestra teacher with his own local group known as Kerr's Orchestra. Lula Kerr taught for five years at Mt. Zion School and in 1891 became the first primary teacher at Emile School, the Black school which opened that year. She was a member of Paul Quinn A.M.E. Church, a leader of local lodges in Bastrop, and taught in Bastrop a total of 40 years. She and her husband were responsible for building the Kerr Community Center at 1308 Walnut. Their home (87) still stands at 1305 Pine St.

ROBERT A. KERR

CONTINUATION SHEET

Robert A. Kerr was one of Bastrop's leading Black citizens during the late 19th century. Born in New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1833, Kerr was the son of a white man, Major Kerr, and was educated privately by his guardian and his father. In 1855 he moved to Port Lavaca, Texas, and during the Civil War worked as a shipping clerk there for Major Kerr. He later engaged in the barber business during the war. Immediately following Emancipation, during registration for the Black voter, Kerr was appointed an election judge for the district embracing San Patricio, Refugio, Calhoun and Victoria counties. After he settled in Bastrop, voters elected Kerr to serve in the 17th Legislature of Texas, 1881-82. Kerr was also responsible for building Emile High School for Blacks. Because of his popularity, white voters asked for Kerr's political assistance in encouraging the passage of a bond issue. In return for his help they agreed to build a school for Black students. In 1893 Kerr was elected a member of the Bastrop School Board. Robert Kerr's house (88), located at 806 Marion, is still owned by a family member.

MARY ANN McDOWALL

Mary Ann Nicholson McDowall was born in Bastrop in 1843 to Mr. and Mrs. James Nicholson and was named for her mother's only sister, Mrs. Henry Crocheron. After her mother died, Mary Ann, and her brother and sister moved in with Mr. and Mrs. Crocheron in Bastrop. Mary Ann became an accomplished pianist and musician. During the Civil War, Mr. Crocheron was involved in importing commercial products from England through Matamoros, where Mary Ann met a young Englishman, William McDowall. After their marriage in 1868, the McDowalls lived in London, England. However, William McDowall died of yellow fever the following year and Mary Ann returned to Bastrop with her three month old daughter, Ruth. Mrs. McDowall began teaching music lessons and was a famous music teacher for many years in Bastrop. The St. Cecilia Orchestra and Fortnightly Club met in her home and Mrs. McDowall took the initiative in bringing to Bastrop lecturers, pianists, and readers. In 1897 when her daughter died, Mrs. McDowall moved to Houston where

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she lived with her sister until her death in 1931. Her unpublished manuscript, "A Little Journey through Memory's Halls" has given much insight into Bastrop's early history. Her house (50) which she inherited from her uncle Henry Crocheron, remains as one of the finest Greek Revival houses in town at 1502 Wilson.

SARAH JANE ORGAIN

CONTINUATION SHEET

Sarah Jane Orgain was an outstanding leader in educational and cultural affairs of early Bastrop. Arriving in Bastrop in 1867 from Tennessee, Mrs. Orgain was a pioneer educator in the city. In 1869 she opened the Colorado Institute in Bastrop and conducted the school for 35 consecutive years. The school had a fine reputation and was attended by students all over the country. When the Bastrop Public Library was started in 1900, Mrs. Orgain served as the first president. 602 Cedar Street is the location of Mrs. Orgain's residence (44).

JOSEPH D. SAYERS

Joseph D. Sayers was born at Grenada, Mississippi, September 23, 1841. After his mother's death, he came to Bastrop, Texas, with his father and brother in 1851. He attended the Hancock School in Bastrop and received the degree of bachelor of arts from the Bastrop Military Institute June 7, 1860. After serving in the Civil War, Sayers returned to Bastrop and was admitted to the Bar in 1866. Sayers served an active political career as State Senator in 1873, State Chairman of the Democratic Executive Committee, 1875-1878, Lieutenant-Governor of Texas, 1879-1881, representative from the ninth Texas district in the Congress of the United States, 1885-1899, member of the Committee on Appropriations for 12 years and chairman of that committee for two, Governor of Texas 1899-1903, Master in Chancery in Federal courts regent of the Univeristy of Texas, Chairman of the Industrial Accident Board, Chairman of the Board of Pardons. He died on May 15, 1929. Sayers' house (40) stands today at 1703 Wilson Street.

JAMES HARVEY WILBARGER

Son of Josiah P. Wilbarger, James Harvey conducted regular oxwagon train to Matamoros, hauling lumber, hides and cotton, thus blazing the Wilbarger Trace from Wilbarger's Bend to Matamoros. In 1860 Wilbarger was granted a license by the State Internal Revenue Department to manufacture and sell lumber. In the 1850's Wilbarger bought an 1842 Greek Revival house in Bastrop, which became the scene of many of Bastrop's social and musical events. 1403 Main Street (?) is the location of the residence.

JOSIAH PUGH WILBARGER

Born in 1801 in Bourbon County, Kentucky, Josiah Pugh Wilbarger was among Austin's first settlers in the "Little Colony" in 1827. He

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built a stockade against the Indians at a bend in the Colorado about 10 miles above present Bastrop. He taught school, farmed and raised cattle and built the first grist and cotton mill in Bastrop County. His settlement in Bastrop County became known as Wilbarger's Bend.

LOCAL PRESERVATION ACTIVITIES

Bastrop is a town where its citizens are just awakening to the value of their unique architectural heritage. A few houses have been restored within the last couple of years and during the year that this survey has been conducted a number of houses have been sold to new owners whose plan is to rehabilitate them. The Bastrop County Jail, vacated two years ago as a county jail facility, is currently being restored with the aid of a matching grant from the OAHP to use as offices and a museum. The commercial properties within the Bastrop Commercial District have seen continued use as a business center. Therefore, although many of the buildings have undergone the typical 1950's and '60's facade alterations, the late 19th century commercial buildings remain intact and in a good state of preservation.

PATTERNS OF CONCENTRATION

In choosing properties for nomination to the National Register, the only intact concentration of architecturally significant structures was within the commercial district. With only minor intrusions, the Bastrop Commercial District represents a cohesive $2\frac{1}{2}$ -block area of Victorian commercial buildings similar in scale and material. Although there are parts of the city where a large number of residences are concentrated, particularly the area west of the courthouse and north of town along Church, Main and Pecan Streets, these areas are intersperced with modern housing and lack the cohesion of the commercial district.

EXCEPTIONS TO THE CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

The multi-resource nomination contains a few properties that have been moved or are in the process of relocation. Ascension Church (60), situated presently at 909 Water, was threatened with demolition by the owners, the Ascension Catholic Church, who plan to build a new church on the site. The parish had previously torn down the Victorian rectory which stood adjacent to the church. A <u>Black Baptist</u> congregation has recently purchased the building for a nominal fee and is moving the building to a site further north on Water Street between Maple and Magnolia Streets. The building is an excellent example of Victorian Gothic architecture in Bastrop and the new congregation plans to restore the church building. Since the building is being restored, used for its original purpose, located on a city lot within the multi-resource area, and has been saved from demolition by the move, we decided that

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the building still merits including on the National Register. A second building, the P. A. Fry House (93) at 1403 Government St. was moved from its original location in the 500 block of Marion St. when the right-of-way was purchased for Highway 71 built along that thoroughfare. The house served as the home of one of Bastrop's well-known Black school teachers and is now located across the street from Emile School, where P. A. Fry taught for many years. Because of its assoclation with one of Bastrop's early Black educators, the house has been included for nomination to the National Register.

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The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries proved to be the most prosperous era in Bastrop's development. The majority of the buildings included within the Bastrop multi-resource National Register nomination were constructed during this period and represent the affluence achieved by many of the townspeople at the turn of the century. Specifically, the periods between 1880-1895 and 1905-1920 marked the most significant booms in the city.

The arrival of the MKT railroad in 1887 signalled the beginning of a new era for Bastrop. Although the city is located near the banks of the Colorado, the river has remained unnavigable, thus confining trade prior to the coming of the railroad to the immediate area surrounding Bastrop. The cheaper cost of transporting goods offered by the railroad proved to be the most significant factor in the city's late nineteenth century development.

The new prosperity particularly benefited the retail merchants within the city's commercial district. A large number of one and two-story commercial buildings were erected soon after the coming of the railroad. Constructed of bricks possibly manufactured at the brick kilns in nearby Elgin and transported by rail to Bastrop, the commercial buildings housed a greater selection of goods at prices substantially lower than had ever been possible previously.

A number of residences were also erected in the late 1880's and early 1890's. Displaying vernacular Victorian architectural detailing, the majority of these structures were frame houses made of lumber cut from the nearby forests. The abundant supply of wood continued to be the major source of building material for Bastrop well into the present century.

The completion of the county courthouse in 1881 proved to be another important factor in the city's development. Symbolizing the city's prominence within the county, the impressive three-story courthouse served as the county's center of political activity and, along with the arrival of the railroad, proved to be a catalyst to the city's livelihood. The constant influx of people coming to Bastrop on county government business provided greater economic opportunities for the retail merchants and contributed to the construction of several commercial buildings along Main St.

Contrary to the trend set by many county seats throughout the state in which the courthouse served as the center of the city's commercial district, the Bastrop County Courthouse and accompanying jail occupy a

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public square within a residential neighborhood. The majority of the houses within the courthouse's immediate area were constructed within a few years after the completion of the courthouse and exhibit Victorian composition which characterized residential architecture during this period.

By the late nineteenth century, Bastrop began to benefit from the strong emphasis placed upon education which had been established earlier. Many citizens of Bastrop achieved state-wide prominence, particularly in government. Joseph Sayers, the first graduate of the Bastrop Military Institute, served in the United States House of Representatives from 1885 to 1898 and was elected governor of the State in 1899. Robert Lynn Batts, also educated in Bastrop, became the state assistant attorney general in 1891 and was appointed judge of the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in 1917. George Washington Jones was elected U.S. Senator in 1879 and served until 1887. These individuals contributed to the establishment of Bastrop as one of the state's most influential cities of its size.

By 1900 Bastrop's boom had slackened considerably. Smithville, located eleven miles to the east, had become an important railroad center and mushroomed in population from 616 in 1890 to 2,577 in 1900. Much of the growth which Bastrop had anticipated was directed toward Smithville, and little new development took place in Bastrop until the later part of the first decade.

The discovery of lignite coal created a resurgence of activity in Bastrop between 1905 and 1920. By 1920 Bastrop boasted twelve mines and six coal mining companies. This new industry created many new jobs and boosted the local economy. Impressive two-story Neo-Classical Revival and a few Prairie School residences were erected throughout the city and symbolized the renewed affluence and prominence of many of the townspeople. A large number of modest vernacular late Victorian homes were also constructed at this time and typify the city's turn of the century architectural flavor.

The boom associated with the coal industry did not flourish long. The expensive process of mining the coal, along with the cheap production and the advent of the mass use of oil by 1920 signalled the virtual demise of the coal industry in Texas. The decreased demand for coal hampered Bastrop's growth. Little development has occurred since 1920. The creation of Camp Swift, a military training area, in 1942 stimulated the economy briefly but its effect was minimal. Presently, the city relies upon agricultural and dairy farming and serves as the retail and shipping center for a large area in the county.

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COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

Located along Main St., the Bastrop Commercial District represents the city's oldest commercial area and consists of a high concentration of late nineteenth and early twentieth century brick structures. The majority of properties within the district are commercial; however, two residences are included within the southern boundary and the Calvary Episcopal Church and a residence are situated at the northwest corner of the district. The Colorado River serves as the western boundary of the district while residential neighborhoods surround the remaining edges.

Because of the available supply and cheap cost of lumber, all of the commercial structures along Main St. prior to the 1870's were of wood frame construction. A devastating fire in 1862 virtually leveled the downtown and re-development was slow. The merchants desired more fireproof and permanent brick structures, but little masonry construction took place within the commercial district until the late nineteenth century. The Jung family established a brickyard in the mid to late 1800's and no doubt played a crucial role in the re-development of downtown; however, the close proximity of Elgin, a major brick manufacturing center in central Texas and the arrival of the railroad which linked the two cities suggests a strong likelihood that bricks from Elgin were transported via rail to Bastrop and used for a number of the commercial buildings along Main St.

In general, the railroad allowed cheap transportation of goods, and the commercial district, in its peak years in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, became the retail center for Bastrop County. Dry goods, hardware, saloons, general merchandise stores and other enterprises offered a wide variety of goods at prices lower than ever before. The merchants prospered and continued constructing brick stores along Main St. The Old First National Bank Building (119) was erected in 1889 and symbolized the bank's stability and permanence within the community. The Elzner family operated numerous businesses along Main St. including Elzner Hardware Building (113) and Elzner's corner building (112). The Erhard Drug Store (102), presumed to be the oldest drug store in Texas still in operation, served as one of the city's most important enterprises.

The development of the downtown continued through the first two decades of the twentieth century. By 1920, the architectural composition of the commercial area appeared much as it does today excluding the contemporary alterations and intrusions. Like so many small towns, much of the commercial activity is being drawn away from the downtown and

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has relocated along a new highway which passes two miles south of the district. Main St. continues to be the hub but an ever increasing number of buildings are vacant.

The majority (29) of the structures within the district are listed as contributing, i.e. those buildings which enhance the architectural and historical integrity and cohesiveness of the district. Ranging from one to two stories in heighth, these Victorian commercial buildings display brick or pressed metal cornices and, in many cases, are pierced with round arched openings. Most of the structures are still in use and have been altered slightly, e.g. ground floor of many of the store fronts and the stuccoed front facade of the Citizen's National Bank (124).

Comprising the second type of classification, fifteen sites are categorized as compatible properties and include 1) turn of the century structures which have reversible alterations and 2) contemporary buildings which reflect the scale, mass and material of the older commercial structures and, therefore, do not detract from the architectural integrity of the district. The first type includes buildings which, in spite of modifications, still retain most of their original detailing and could easily be restored to their original appearance. The Western Auto building at 1008 Main (between 120 and 121) illustrates a typical example of aluminum siding disguising the structures original facade. The second category includes more recent buildings which are sympathetic to the architectural cohesiveness of the district.

Only two structures within the district detract from the integrity of the area and are considered as intrusions. These buildings exhibit conflicting styles, scale, massing and construction from the compatible and contributing sites within the district.

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bastrop multi-resource nomination contains a partial inventory of the town's cultural resources, limited to the historic and architectural features of the property. Each inventory form contains a "Designation" category which includes the area of significance of each site. Based upon the Survey Methodology of item 7 page 4, the evaluations are represented with "H" and/or "A" designation. "H" refers to any significant event or person associated with the site while "A" refers to structures which display good or excellent architectural detailing, style and/or craftsmanship. In some cases, the property possesses both architectural and historic significance and, therefore, is distinguished by an H, A designation.

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ADDITIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

Interstate Journal of Progress, November-December 1920, Vol. II, No. 5.

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9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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