

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



1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Tyler County Courthouse  
Other name/site number: N/A  
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

2. Location

Street & number: 100 West Bluff St  
City or town: Woodville State: Texas County: Tyler  
Not for publication:  Vicinity:

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 3/26/15  
Signature of certifying official / Title Date  
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: \_\_\_\_\_

Jan Edson K. Beall 5-18-15  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

	Private
<b>X</b>	Public - Local
	Public - State
	Public - Federal

**Category of Property**

<b>X</b>	building(s)
	district
	site
	structure
	object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	2	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	3	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions:** GOVERNMENT/county courthouse

**Current Functions:** GOVERNMENT/county courthouse

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification:** MODERN MOVEMENT/Moderne; LATE VICTORIAN

**Principal Exterior Materials:** Stucco

**Narrative Description** (see continuation sheets 7-6 through 7-14)

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## 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:** N/A

**Areas of Significance:** Politics/Government

**Period of Significance:** 1891 - 1965

**Significant Dates:** 1937

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

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

**Architect/Builder:** T.S. Hodges (1891 architect); W.C. Meador (1937 renovations)

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (see continuation sheets 8-15 through 8-22)

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

**Bibliography** (see continuation sheet 9-23)

### 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): N/A

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## 10. Geographical Data

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

### Coordinates

#### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A

1. Latitude: 30.774886° Longitude: -94.415566°

**Verbal Boundary Description:** The nominated property is bound by on the north TX Hwy 190, on the east by TX Hwy 69, on the south by Wheat Street and on the west Charlton Street.

**Boundary Justification:** Boundary encompasses all resources historically associated with the property.

## 11. Form Prepared By

and based largely on Graham B. Luhn's *Master Plan for Restoration/Renovation of the 1891/1935 Tyler County Courthouse* (2000).

Name/title: Stephenie Yearwood, Tyler County Historical Commission

Address: 4453 Stony Meadow Ln

City: Austin State: Texas Zip Code: 78731

Email: steffiy1@yahoo.com

Telephone: 409-656-5410

Date: October 2014

## Additional Documentation

**Maps** (see continuation sheet Map-24 through Map-26)

**Additional items** (see continuation sheets Figure-27 through Figure-39)

**Photographs** (see log on pages 5-6 and continuation sheets Photo-40 through Photo-49)

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## Photographs

Name of Property: Tyler County Courthouse  
City or Vicinity: Woodville  
County, State: Tyler County, Texas  
Photographer: Stephenie Yearwood and THC Staff  
Date Photographed: October 13, 2014 and February 26, 2015  
Number of Photo(s): Thirteen

**The following digital images were submitted to the National Park Service on CD, along with this nomination document. For reference, the images are included at the end of this document, beginning on page 40.**

TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0001.tif  
North (primary) façade. Camera facing approximately southwest.

TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0002.tif  
North (primary) façade. Camera facing approximately southeast.

TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0003.tif  
Detail of primary entry on north façade. Camera facing east.

TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0004.tif  
Detail of north entrance on ground floor. Camera facing approximately southeast.

TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0005.tif  
South (rear) façade. Camera facing approximately northwest.

TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0006.tif  
East façade. Camera facing approximately northwest.

TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0007.tif  
Detail of ground floor entry hall. Taken from just inside the north entry. Camera facing south.

TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0008.tif  
Detail of interior door located within the oldest part of the courthouse, ground floor. Camera facing approximately southwest.

TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0009.tif  
Interior of second floor courtroom. Camera facing approximately southwest.

TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0010.tif  
Interior of ground floor lobby of the south entrance. Camera facing north.

TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0011.tif  
Noncontributing annex. Camera facing southeast.

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TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0012.tif  
Noncontributing foundation of the domino hall. Camera facing west.

TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0013.tif  
Noncontributing foundation of the old jail. Camera facing approximately east.

**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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## Narrative Description

The Tyler County Courthouse dominates a square city block in Woodville, Texas, a town in the Southeast Texas Piney Woods. The three-story courthouse, built in 1891 and substantially altered in 1937, is an amalgam of Victorian-era eclecticism and depression-era Moderne. Designed in 1891 by T.S. Hodges of the Corpus Christi architectural firm of Glover & Hodges, it was constructed by the McKnight Brothers High Victorian Gothic style. The depression-era, WPA-sponsored renovation replaced the original slate mansard and gabled roofs with flat roofs, rebuilt the clock tower, added an exterior stair on the main north entrance, a three-story addition on the south side to serve as a jail, and a two-story office addition. In addition to interior changes such as the expansion of the main courtroom, the WPA project covered the Victorian brickwork with stucco and stripped away much Victorian detailing. The resulting modified Moderne-inspired building reflects the changing aesthetics of the generations it has served for over 120 years.

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## Setting

The Tyler County Courthouse stands slightly off-center on the courthouse square in Woodville, Texas, located at the intersection of TX Hwy 190 and TX Hwy 69, which form its north and east boundaries respectively. It is bounded by Wheat Street on the south and Charlton Street on the west. This location was designated as the courthouse square in 1849 and was the site of two previous courthouses prior to the construction of this building in 1891. The Woodville street grid is aligned roughly on N/S/E/W coordinates, and the courthouse faces north.

Sidewalks lead to the main entrance on the north and a subsidiary entrance on the south. The courthouse is surrounded by mature oaks, magnolias, pines and lawn. Flower beds near the main entrance are maintained by local civic groups, and a landscaped area for signs announcing civic events is on the northeast corner at the highway intersection.

At the northeast corner of the courthouse sits the only other building located on the square: a one-story office building constructed in 1979 which now houses the District Attorney's offices (noncontributing building). The office building is approximately 1500 square feet, constructed of painted concrete block and with a flat roof. The building has little architectural detailing, in keeping with its modern style. Its primary entrance—a single aluminum and glass door—faces west towards the courthouse and narrow, horizontal bands of clerestory windows run just below the roof level on three sides. A small reception area and several offices are finished with paneling, vinyl tile flooring and ceiling-mounted fluorescent lights. Its low rectangular shape and utilitarian modern style render it unobtrusive. Not yet fifty years old, the building is noncontributing.

A large, rectangular, brick and concrete slab ringed by an iron pipe railing (noncontributing site) directly to the east of the courthouse is the last remnant of an 1889 jail which was demolished during the renovations of the 1930s. Another small slab (noncontributing site) sits to the west of the courthouse—the remains of a domino hall added in 1973 and removed in 2005. As foundations are all that remain of these buildings, they are counted as noncontributing sites.

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Four Texas historical markers are located to the north of the main entrance near the sidewalk; these recognize the courthouse square, the courthouse itself,<sup>1</sup> Col. Philip Work, leader of the Civil War Texas Brigade, and the Woodville Academy. A Veteran's Memorial monument stands in front of the outside stair, and a separate Memorial stands to the northeast of the square honoring a local man who was recognized with the Distinguished Flying Cross for action in Afghanistan before his death. Given the smaller scale of these markers and monuments, they are not included in the official count of resources for this nomination.

**General Exterior Description<sup>2</sup>** (*refer to plans, drawings, and photos in the continuation sheets at end*)

The original 1891 courthouse makes up the front (or northern) half of the current Tyler County Courthouse. The rear half represents additions made in 1937.

The three-story 1891 courthouse was an example of High Victorian Gothic. The walls and face of the building were red brick incorporating decorative corbeling, window arches, and pilasters. The windows themselves were double hung, wood-framed painted white on the exterior, featuring decorative incised designs between the arched tops of paired windows. The center hall plan was emphasized on the exterior by large arches supported by cast iron columns on the first and second floors, framing recessed entries. At the second floor level, the recessing of the doors allowed for small exterior balconies on the front and rear facades. These balconies were further emphasized by checkerboard-patterned square stones above the arches. The roof featured stone-accented gables (two each on front and rear as well as one on each side) with galvanized iron cornices. The most marked feature of the exterior was its high-peaked Victorian clock tower with "checkerboard" stonework, Roman numeral clock face, pyramid-topped corner bastions, and wrought iron cresting.

As will be described in greater detail below, the 1937 "modernization" efforts removed or covered much of the original Victorian-era detailing and introduced large additions to the rear of the original courthouse, effectively doubling the building's square footage. The original mansard and gabled roofs were removed and replaced with a built-up flat roof with parapets; the recessed arched entries were flushed; an exterior staircase was added to provide primary access to the second floor; the clock tower was modified to a "Moderne" design utilizing materials from the original tower (portions of the historic peaked structure remain on the interior); and all of the exterior brick and stone work was covered in cement stucco. The original windows were left in place in their original configuration. The reinforced concrete rear additions, also sheathed in stucco, are characterized by their boxy massing and absence of ornament. The result is a rambling series of cubes that resembles a style that has been called "Modern Classic," "Stripped Classic," or "PWA Moderne," albeit a rather awkward example of the style.<sup>3</sup>

An exterior stair was added to the front of the building and the original stone archways were removed (a small number of the "checkerboard" stones were painted and reused in a diamond-shaped motif on the clock tower). The jail addition was built first, then the rear wall of the historic courthouse was removed and the two buildings

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<sup>1</sup> The Tyler County Courthouse was designated a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL) in 2000.

<sup>2</sup> Much of the description section is adapted from Graham B. Luhn, *Master Plan for Restoration/Renovation of the 1891/1935 Tyler County Courthouse*, January 2000, pp., III.B.2.1-III.B.2-3.

<sup>3</sup> Jay Henry uses the term "Modern Classicism" in *Architecture in Texas: 1895-1945*. Willard B. Robinson calls this style "Stripped Classic" in *The People's Architecture: Texas Courthouses, Jails, and Municipal Buildings* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1983). The term "PWA Moderne" refers to this style as applied in New Deal building programs.



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joined as the courtroom was expanded (historic windows were reused in this connecting section). The entire facility was then covered in cement stucco.

### **North Elevation**

The north elevation of the courthouse provides the main entry. At ground level, a sidewalk leads to three arches centered under the main bay. The arches provide access to a covered passageway roofed by the landing of the two flanking exterior stairways. The double modern glass doors which give ground floor access into the main hall are virtually unseen beneath the landing. This exterior stair, added in the WPA renovations, provides access to the second story.

The stucco facade is adorned by a simple three-step molding (originally the corbelled brick banding) dividing the first and second floor levels and another above the third floor windows below a box cornice. It is visually dominated by the graceful regularity of the double arched windows retained from the 1891 structure. The windows proportionally reduce in size from ground floor up, although they maintain the same overall design, with each of the windows having its own arched top, spanned by a second arch over each pair. Two sets of double windows flank the central bay on each of the three floors, providing a clue as to the interior spatial arrangement. Unadorned pilasters define the central bay, rising from second floor level of the stair landing to the roof, echoed by similar corner moldings which rise the full three stories. Above the doors on the stair landing at third floor level, three smaller rectangular four-light windows are centered in the central bay. This bay is topped by a cubical tower with a simple inset tile motif at fourth floor level and the engraved "TYLER COUNTY COURTHOUSE," which in turn is topped by a smaller cubical tower displaying the Seth Thomas clock purchased at the time of the 1891 construction.

### **West Elevation**

The west facade is six bays wide. The three northernmost bays correspond with original 1891 construction; of these, the central one projects forward approximately six feet. The bay has three arched single windows at three levels and single windows in the lateral projecting wall at each level. The flanking bays feature two single arched windows at each level. Fluted stucco spandrels adjoin the second- and third-floor windows. The three-step moldings, box cornice, and corner pilasters continue on this facade, as does the proportional sizing of windows. To the south of this original portion of the west facade, the depression-era additions are visible—first a recessed "connector" addition, then the jail addition, and finally the two-story office addition. Because of the sloping grade of the site, the second story of the office addition corresponds roughly to the first story of the rest of the building.

On the connector segment (the courtroom expansion) and jail addition, three-step moldings and corner pilasters continue. However, the connector, which is recessed about 6 feet from the original and the jail, uses four-over-four rectangular windows on the ground level. At second and third floor levels, the original two-over-two arched windows were reused.

The next segment of the facade consists of the depression-era addition built to serve as the jail. This section continues the stucco exterior detailing, but uses rectangular windows. Ground level and second story level each show four window positions, with two blank at each level. At third floor level, there are four windows.

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Finally, the southernmost portion of the west facade shows the two-story office addition added at the conclusion of the WPA work in 1937. Two rectangular windows appear at each level, the bottom level corresponding to the basement level of the original structure, and the second level corresponding to the original ground floor. The stucco exterior continues, but the three-step moldings do not appear, the only ornamentation being simple corner pilasters.

### **South Elevation**

The south facade displays the two-story office addition which is wider and sits one level lower than the original courthouse building. It continues the stucco exterior, but with reduced ornamentation. The sidewalk continues on this side, leading to the central south entry which sits at basement level to the original structure. The entry, a glass and metal double door with a flat canopy above, is located in a central bay flanked by two pilasters and surmounted by a single rectangular metal window at ground story level. The central bay is flanked symmetrically by two bays on each side, each bay demarked by flattened pilasters running from ground level to the top of the upper level windows. In each flanking bay two rectangular two-over-two horizontal-light windows appear on the bottom (basement level) floor and two above. All windows on this facade are similar, although those on the upper level are taller than those below, reversing the proportionality of the original north facade. The facade is topped by a slightly recessed parapet.

Also visible from the south, behind the two story addition, are the upper two floors of the depression-era jail addition. The south facade of these upper floors shows three symmetrical bays, each with two rectangular windows on the top level and two below. Corner pilasters and two pilasters frame the three bays. Stucco remains the exterior material with three-step moldings and a box cornice above the upper windows.

### **East Elevation**

The east elevation is essentially the same as the west, showing the chronological succession (from north to south) of the original three story structure, an added depression-era three story connector and jail addition, and a two-story office addition sitting one level below the original structure. As with the west facade, the original building's east facade shows a central projecting bay with three stories of single arched windows and flanking wall segments with single windows at each level. However, windows in the ground level of the east bay were removed and the openings plastered over during the depression-era work to provide more secure storage for what was then a file room. As on the west, the connector shows how some of the original windows were reused, mixing them with new rectangular windows on different floors. The three story jail addition is altered on this front by the 1937 addition of a one-story maintenance room covered in stucco. The sidewalk which surrounds three sides of the building is replaced on this side by a driveway entering from the south to give access to the maintenance area.

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### **Interior**<sup>4</sup> (*refer to plans and photos in the continuation sheets at end*)

One of the most significant alterations to the interior of the original portion of the courthouse undertaken during 1937 was the replacement of the original wood floor structure throughout. The replacement consisted of a composite system comprised of light steel trusses and salvaged wood joists supporting new concrete pan floors. (Pieces of the original tongue and groove flooring, as well as pieces of what appears to be salvaged beaded board wainscoting, were reused as nailers for the installation of the acoustical tile ceiling.) With the exception of the hall walls and most first floor walls, it appears that some of the interior walls were removed or relocated. Finishes and detailing in the 1891 portion of the building consist of a mix of those that date to original construction, those that were installed as part of the 1937 renovation, and some, such as plywood wall paneling, that were installed in later “modernization” efforts. Much of that in the addition dates to the original WPA-era construction.

#### *Basement*

The basement level of the original courthouse building consists primarily of crawl space with mechanical piping. The exception is a small brick-walled cellar at the southeast corner, which is accessed via an external hatch-door and stair on the east wall. The basement level of the 1937 additions house a boiler room, mechanical room, several storage spaces, and records rooms, in addition to office space.

The southernmost portion of this level is the first floor of the 2-story office addition; as such, there is a ground-level entry from the south which opens up to a small lobby. Walls throughout the public and office spaces are painted plaster or gypsum board, and floors are 12 x 12 vinyl composition tile with black diamond pattern in large open areas and at doors. Office doors are wood. Interior windows and doors have wood trim. Nail-in acoustical tiles, installed in 1937, cover the ceilings. Exposed conduits carry cabling near the ceilings and along walls.

#### *First Floor*

The first floor retains the central hall arrangement of the original courthouse. Entering the 1891 portion of the building from the north, the hall is 15 feet wide. The width narrows in the 1937 additions, but the entire length serves as a lobby since it holds the elevator and stairs to the upper levels in addition to providing access to the various offices on this floor. A short flight of three steps demarcates the transition from the original building to the addition. Large black and white vinyl composition tiles cover the floor; they are laid in a decorative diamond pattern in some public spaces. This floor covering was installed in 1937 and replaced the hardwood floors in the original building. The walls of the hall/lobby are painted plaster. The two and one half foot oak wainscoting which originally graced the 1891 lobby walls was removed during the 1937 renovations. Acoustical tiles comprise the ceiling. Public access is provided to the upper floors via an elevator located along the east wall of the original lobby near the north entry, and via a stair in the southern half of the building. The elevator was installed in the early 1980s and replaced the original stair.

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<sup>4</sup> Adapted from Graham B. Luhn, *Master Plan for Restoration/Renovation of the 1891/1935 Tyler County Courthouse*, January 2000, pp. III.B.2-III.B.3. Supplemented with reports on 2013 architectural investigations undertaken by Volz & Associates, Inc., on file at the Texas Historical Commission.

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Rooms for various functions open off the central corridor. In the original portion of the building, the county clerk occupies the northeast and southeast offices; vault storage lies between the two offices. Cast iron columns with classical detailing and a corrugated iron ceiling remain in place in the vault. Offices to the west of the hall host the county treasurer and judge on either side of the commissioner's court room. The addition holds additional office space for various county officials/staff, a work room, and public restrooms to the east of the hall. To the west lie spaces for even more offices, a law library, and internal stairs to the court and jail facilities above.

In the 1891 portion, original wood moldings with dentils remain on the interior doorframe of the north entry door. Originally, all door and window frames were made of pine in "East Lake" design and doors to the public hall were equipped with transoms. Most public doors were replaced with units of glass and aluminum in the early 1980s. However, some of the original wood door frames and trim remain in place, as does at least one of the original transoms. Vinyl composition tile on the floors replaced original wood in 1937; some offices now have carpet. Walls are variously painted plaster or covered in T1-11-type plywood paneling. Ceilings are covered with acoustical tiles.

Most offices in the 1937 addition have carpeted floors, painted plaster walls, and ceilings with acoustical tiles—(some the early nail-in variety installed in 1937, some the later lay-in with metal grid design). Doors are a mix of aluminum and glass and wood panel. Lights are generally fluorescent tubes and some offices have window air conditioning units.

### *Second Floor*

The second floor is reached via the external stair or the elevator (1980s) located on the east side of the central lobby. An additional stair, intended for staff/official use only, is located immediately south (or behind) the district courtroom. In fact, the entire second floor is dedicated to functions associated with the district court. In addition to the courtroom itself, the second floor hosts offices for the district clerk, the judge's chambers, and a jury room. Originally this floor held a two-cell jail with a steel door. The cells were converted to storage areas in the 1930s renovation. The original jury room has been reduced by the addition of two restrooms.

A small, central lobby is located at the northern end of the building. The elevator is located to the east, a stair to the third floor to the west. Offices for the district clerk lie on either side of the lobby, as do various storage rooms. Vinyl composite tiles cover the floor of the lobby, while carpet covers floors in the offices. Offices have painted plaster walls, and most have original wood window trim with corner rosette detailing. Most lighting is tubular fluorescents. A 1998 fire in the District Clerk's office resulted in smoke and water damage throughout the building. This office has been restored to its pre-fire appearance. Windows and doors were restored to exactly replicate the original 1891 units destroyed by the fire.

The removal of the rear wall of the original building enlarged the courtroom in the 1930s; slender columns mark the location of the original wall. The judge's bench and associated courtroom furniture were moved back to the new rear wall and additional seating was added. The judge sits facing north; the jury sits on bolted swivel seats to his right. A low wood wall separates the public seating area, which is furnished with long wood benches. The original balconies have since been closed in to house HVAC equipment, which was installed in the 1980s. Floors, originally varnished heart pine, are covered vinyl composition tile with black tile patterning in front of

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the judge's bench and public seating area. Walls are painted plaster, but originally had a 2-1/2 foot wainscoting. The ceiling has been dropped and is composed of a lay-in acoustical tile with metal grid and fluorescent lighting.

A single wood door to the west of the judge's bench leads to a hallway with direct access to judge's chambers, as well as an internal stair that leads up to the 1930s jail facility above and another, separate stair that leads to the lower level only. A single wood door to the east of the judge's bench leads to the jury consultation rooms and restrooms.

### *Third Floor*

The third floor originally housed two offices and the courtroom galleries. These galleries featured banisters and rails allowing good views to the courtroom below. During the 1930s modernization, the courtroom balcony was reconfigured into two small, separate balconies, one on each side. To accommodate the HVAC system installed in the 1980s, these balconies were walled in. A new floor was also added on the third level above the courtroom lobby and as there was no longer an attic, the original wood stairs were relocated to this space to allow access to the tower room. The north end of the third floor currently houses numerous small offices in addition to the mechanical and storage spaces. Floors consist of vinyl composite tile, walls of painted plaster, and ceilings of acoustical ceiling tiles. Most doors are wood with wood trim; some are wood frame with glass panels.

The south end of the third floor is the 1930s jail facility. Floors, walls, and ceiling are concrete. A hallway which served as a guard walk circles the perimeter of a central core of jail cells. Four connected cells sit in the eastern half of the facility. There are also two isolated cells and one cell devoted to solitary confinement. The cells are made of bolted steel plates and grids. Some doors are solid steel. As the jail is no longer used for anything but storage, all plumbing fixtures have been removed. This facility served as the county jail until the early 1980s when conditions merited the construction of a new facility. The new Tyler County Justice Center began housing inmates in 1985.

### *Clock Tower*

A stair provides the only access to the base of the two-story clock tower. The tower structure, which was modified radically during the 1930's remodeling, houses the original "Town Clock No. 16" manufactured in Connecticut by the Seth Thomas Clock Co. as ordered in December 1891. The clock has been kept in working order and is still in use--however, it has been converted from counter weight drive to electric motor and the bell striker has been disconnected. The original weights are in storage. This room is the only one in which original 1891 pine flooring remains intact.

### **Integrity**

The original portion of the Tyler County Courthouse has undergone numerous changes since 1891. However, taken together with the 1937 additions, the courthouse as a whole retains a sufficient degree of integrity to convey its significance under Criterion A for its association with government activity.

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As the seat of Tyler County government on this public square since 1891, the courthouse retains integrity of location, setting, and association to a high degree. Other aspects of integrity—primarily those of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling—date to the WPA-era renovation and additions. However, the distinctly Victorian-era windows, both in materials and design, do convey an earlier association, as does the presence of a central clock tower. The interior, too, contains an eclectic mix of design features and materials dating to both eras. Thus, the building as a whole reflects both its Victorian core and its Depression-era “modernization.” It looks almost identical to the way it did when the 1930s modernization effort was complete.

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## Statement of Significance

The Tyler County Courthouse has served as the seat of county government since 1891. The building has housed the District Courtroom, the District Clerk's office, the offices of County Judges and Commissioners, as well as the offices of the county Sheriff, law-enforcement and the jail. The courthouse's significance in the area of government is enhanced as an example of a WPA-sponsored project intended to modernize an older public facility. The 1937 project, which expanded and modernized the 1891 courthouse, is a local example of the type of federal, state, and local funding partnerships that resulted in the construction of public buildings throughout the nation during the Great Depression. For its years of service as the seat of county government, and for its association with an important government-sponsored public works effort, the courthouse is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Politics/Government at the local level of significance. The period of significance begins in 1891, the date of the original construction, and ends in 1965 to correspond to the fifty-year threshold for eligibility at the time of this nomination.

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## Development of Tyler County and Woodville to 1891<sup>5</sup>

Tyler County is located in the piney woods of Southeast Texas. Its rolling hills, creeks, and sandy loam soil have made it a consistently productive area for small scale agriculture. During the 1820s Anglo migrants from the southern United States began to settle near the already established Alabama, Coushatta and Cherokee tribal settlements. Under the Republic of Texas, the Cherokee were driven from the area by order of Mirabeau B. Lamar. However, Sam Houston had formed personal ties to the Alabama and Coushatta, and they were allowed to remain. To the present, these groups have remained a presence in the county. The Alabama-Coushatta Reservation, one of two reservations in the state, lies in Polk County, just to the west of Tyler County.

The area was first governmentally organized in January 1841 when the Congress of the Republic created the Menard District of Liberty County. At that time, Town Bluff, located on the Neches River, which later formed the eastern boundary of the county, was the largest settlement and served as the seat of government. After Texas was admitted to the Union, Tyler County was officially established on April 3, 1846. It was named in honor of President John Tyler who was largely responsible for the annexation of Texas to the United States.

Tyler County is bounded on the north and the east by the Neches River, and consists of 908 square miles dominated by timberland of mixed pine and hardwood. Hilly uplands are divided by creeks and tributaries which drain south and east into the Neches and Village Creek. Mixed sandy loam characterizes the majority of the county, with rocky uplands at the northern extreme, and streaks of richer soils in creek and Neches river bottomland.

Upon the creation of the county, the residents were charged to select a county seat by election. Dr. Josiah Wheat, the first doctor in the area, donated 200 acres at the center of the county and located in the "forks of Turkey Creek" on the condition that it be selected as the county seat. It was. The new settlement was named

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<sup>5</sup> Adapted from Megan Biesele, "TYLER COUNTY" *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hct10>), accessed August 05, 2014. Uploaded June 15, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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Woodville in honor of George T. Wood, the senator who introduced the bill to establish the county and later a governor. The street to the south of the courthouse square was named Wheat Street, and the street to the west was named for N.B. Charlton, a legislator from the area who worked with Wood to pass the necessary legislation.

Migration from southern states continued steadily; by 1850, the population of the county was 1894, increasing to 4525 by 1860 with 26% being Black. The county, however, was only a marginal cotton-growing area, and subsistence farming was the norm. The county produced only 3907 bales of cotton in 1860, and that amount never rose. The county voted for secession, and although it was not invaded, many local men served with Hood's Texas Brigade and other units in battles from Manassas to Appomattox. Reconstruction brought federal troops to the area, and subsistence agriculture continued as before. The economy was flat, and population barely grew with only 5,825 in 1880.

In the 1880's railroads penetrated the area. A North/South line was constructed through the county in 1882, and an east-west line traversed the north part of the county by 1884. Others followed, and the availability of transport kicked off a timber boom, creating the industry which has marked the county ever since. By 1890 there were nineteen sawmills in the county and the population had doubled to 10,867. Mills sprang up all over the county, many of them in small, temporary mills in timber camps which are now ghost towns, long abandoned and overgrown. The Doucette mill, in a community two miles north of Woodville, was a major, permanent installation which made Doucette for a time one of the larger towns in East Texas.

The timber economy of Tyler County remained robust through the turn of the century. Although camps closed down and moved as areas were logged out, the remaining timber resources seemed vast, and new areas of virgin timber beckoned a few miles away. Many of the brick structures around the courthouse square and on Bluff Street were built in this period of prosperity.

### **Previous Tyler County Courthouses<sup>6</sup>**

In 1848 the first Tyler County courthouse was constructed on the courthouse square in Woodville. It was a two-story frame building; Jesse Fulgham was the contractor, and D.D. Enloe provided the lumber from his mill near Colmesneil. According to the Commissioner's Court minutes of January 30, 1849, the Masons of the area were given permission to meet in the "two south rooms of the upper story." A separate jail was constructed for \$82.

By 1856, the county was outgrowing this building, which had also required constant repair. Commissioners Court committee determined in March of 1856 that a new courthouse could be built for \$1500, following a plan submitted by J.D. Norton. After advertisement for bids, a contract was let to J. W. Stewart, a committee was appointed to supervise construction, and an advance payment of \$500 was made in May of 1857. In November of that year, the old courthouse structure was sold to the highest bidder, the same Mr. Stewart, who was obligated to move it from the courthouse square. The new structure was accepted by the court on October 14, 1858. Mr. Stewart was also contracted to add chimneys and fireplaces for \$150, bringing the total cost of the building to \$2,210.

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<sup>6</sup> Lou Ella Moseley, "Tyler County Courthouse," in *Pioneer Days of Tyler County* (Bevil Oaks, TX: Whitmeyer Printing, 1985), 64-71.



Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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This building served adequately until the timber boom of the 1880s. A doubled population consisting largely of lumberjacks had its effects. In 1887 the County Commissioners determined that a new jail was a necessity.<sup>7</sup> A jail designed by Eugene Heiner was constructed on the courthouse square, just to the east of the courthouse. This jail building served the county until the mid-1930's, and its presence accounts for the slightly off-center placement of the next, and current, courthouse.

By 1890, county government was in need of more space, and after several months of disagreement, the Commissioners Court passed a resolution to construct a new courthouse on November 25, 1890.<sup>8</sup> Henry West, the County Judge, advertised for plans and specifications. On Nov. 27, under the provisions of an act authorizing Commissioner's Courts of Texas counties to issue bonds for the erection of courthouses, the Tyler County commissioners voted to issue \$30,000 of 30 year bonds bearing 6% interest. A levy of 25 cents per \$100 valuation was approved to pay for the bonds.

### **Building the 1891 Courthouse<sup>9</sup>**

On February 20, 1891 the architectural firm of Glover and Hodges in Corpus Christi submitted plans for the courthouse. The plans and a contract were approved. The terms of the contract specified that Glover and Hodges were to provide plans, drawings, and specifications for the building, as well as supervising construction for 5% of the contract price of the building. When construction bids were opened, the construction firm of Mahone, Leall and Morris submitted a bid of \$19,972 and received the contract; however the firm failed to post the required bond and the contract was cancelled. Subsequently, the bid of \$21,609 by the McKnight Brothers was approved, and a new contract was signed on May 11, 1891. They posted the required bond of \$15,000 and work started quickly. T.S. Hodges was the architect in charge, and on April 15, 1892 he appeared before the Commissioners to announce that the building was complete. Additional funds were authorized in the next months for fixtures and furniture, purchased from Geo. D. Bernard for \$2,678, and for the Seth Thomas Clock, \$791, and its installation. On Arbor Day 1893, trees were planted on the bare square.

### **Architect and Contractor<sup>10</sup>**

T.S. Hodges, the architect of the 1891 structure, was at the time a partner in the Corpus Christi firm of Glover and Hodges. Little else is recorded about him. Likely, this is the same Thomas S. Hodges "from Lockhart" who won the competition for a courthouse design for Gonzales County in 1893 or 1894, although that structure was never built. If so, his other designs include several major buildings in Lockhart including the beautiful Dr. Eugene Clark Library, the old Lockhart jail, and the First Christian Church. Documents on these Lockhart structures describe him as a "local contractor."<sup>11</sup> In *Architecture in Texas 1895-1945*, Jay C. Henry speculates about how a contractor could have produced a library building of such sophistication saying, "He must have had access to an architectural library in order to create this remarkably sophisticated treatment."<sup>12</sup> Until further information about Hodges' life and education is discovered, speculation must suffice. His partner Frank Scott

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<sup>7</sup> Luhn, *Master Plan*, II. A. 4.

<sup>8</sup> Moseley, "Tyler County Courthouse," 64-71.

<sup>9</sup> Luhn, *Master Plan*, II.C.1-II.C.3.

<sup>10</sup> Luhn, *Master Plan*, Appendix D.

<sup>11</sup> "Dr. Eugene Clark Library—Lockhart, Texas," accessed Aug 14, 2014. <http://www.main.org/tla3/clarklibraryhistory.htm>.

<sup>12</sup> Jay C. Henry, *Architecture in Texas 1895-1945*. (Austin: UT Press, 1993), 85.

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Glover is better known and likely played some part in the design process. Glover is listed in the *New Encyclopedia of Texas*, 1894. A Texas native, he practiced in California, but established a practice in Houston on Sept. 15, 1892. He was a founding member of the "Houston Architects Association." His designs include the Mason Block on Main St. in Houston, the Seaside Hotel in Corpus Christi, and courthouses for Madison County, Grimes County, and Orange County, in addition to Tyler County.

The McKnight Brothers firm responsible for the 1891 courthouse construction was a well-established business originally based in Hallettsville.<sup>13</sup> They began doing work in the Beaumont area in 1890. Matthew McKnight Sr. apparently spent time in Woodville during the construction, since he met and married Lelia Barclay from one of the founding families of the county. He soon relocated the firm to Beaumont, and they were responsible for "more important building construction in the Beaumont district than any other building contractor." McKnight died in 1913 and is buried in Woodville.

### **Tyler County 1891-1935<sup>14</sup>**

Through the first half of the twentieth century, the lumber industry continued to be the backbone of the county. In 1913-14 sawmills had 300 employees. In 1915 the timber industry had the highest maximum wage in the state for its skilled workers. Spur railroads continued to be built, opening new areas for cutting, and in 1925 estimates were that Tyler County had a 15-year supply of virgin long and short leaf pine, perhaps 15 million board feet. Thus the county continued to prosper until the 1920's.

Local lore has always held that the depression started early in Tyler County, and indeed the financial foundation of the county shook when the local bank failed in 1920 as a result of embezzlement. It was rumored that an officer of the bank relocated his residence to somewhere in South America, and in these days prior to FDIC insurance, depositors simply lost their money. Businesses began to fail, and bankruptcies increased. Although agricultural production continued and timber jobs were still available, businesses were greatly reduced, and by the time of the national crash in 1929, the county was already in an economic downturn.

The national depression, of course, made the situation worse. Soon even agricultural produce was difficult to sell, and timber jobs were fewer and fewer as demand fell off. On February 11, 1932, the *Tyler County Booster* reported that Commissioners Court cut all county salaries by 10% and released the agricultural agent. In August of that year, the *Booster* reported that teacher salaries were cut, and the school year was reduced in length. By 1933, federal help was beginning to arrive. On June 22, 1933, the *Booster* announced the establishment of a "Reforestation Camp" at the fairgrounds in Woodville. Workers hired from the relief rolls were to undertake "road maintenance, bridge building and repairing, clearing of road and phone right of way." A November 30 article reported that "hundreds of men have been put to work on Tyler County Projects;" regionally, the headline said, "700 Go to Work on CWA Projects."

By 1935 the "reforestation camp" was retitled, and a "CCC Camp News" column was a weekly item, but relief rolls were still growing. The *Tyler County Booster* reported on May 2, 1935 that 12% of Tyler County

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<sup>13</sup> Frank Johnson, *Texas and Texans*, ed. Eugene Barker and Ernest Winkler (Chicago: American Historical Society, 1914), Vol III, 1590. Reproduced in Luhn, *Master Plan*, Appendix D.

<sup>14</sup> Biesele, *Handbook of Texas Online*

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population was on direct relief as of the end of February, an increase of 13% over the past year. The chart indicated that the percentage of population on relief in Tyler County was significantly lower than in other nearby counties where as many as 20% were on relief. Very likely, this was due to the geography of the county, with many areas well-suited to subsistence farming. But crime was up, and the *Booster* noted on December 12, 1935 that two inmates from Tyler County had been transferred to Jefferson County because the jail was full, under a headline reading “Needed a Tyler Co. Jail.”

### Modernizing the Courthouse 1935-37<sup>15</sup>

In 1935, Commissioners became aware that federal aid funds would likely be available for building and rebuilding of courthouses, and after some debate, a resolution was passed in the summer to apply for a loan and grant from the Federal Emergency Administration Public Works funds for courthouse work. Steinman, Steinman and Goleman were designated as structural engineers.<sup>16</sup> The Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1936 included such funds and placed the projects under the supervision of the WPA. On January 17, 1937 a project proposal was submitted to the Works Progress Administration by M.C. Tatum, County Judge, for the work to include:

Wrecking old Jail, Cleaning, sorting, stacking old materials. Dismantling old prison equipment-cleaning-resetting-painting. Wrecking parts of old Court House-Remodeling old Court House-Building new reinforced concrete jail. Gravel drive from street to jail on south- resodding and grading old jail site-Down spout drain lines. All as set up and described.<sup>17</sup>

The proposal states that final plans and specifications prepared by architect W.C Meador are complete, and that Meador will supervise construction. The justification states,

The present Court house is good and substantial and with new concrete floors and roof and the changes in arrangement shown and with stucco exterior will be as good as a new building. The new jail will provide extra space needed in Court House, permit changing court room, which is badly needed. The old jail is in bad condition structurally, unsanitary and inadequate.

This modernization effort was common at the time and many local governments sought to erect new public edifices—or remodel old ones—that expressed a progressive, forward-thinking attitude which demonstrated a commitment to growth and prosperity. Texas courthouses, city halls and other civic buildings constructed during the time period often exhibit Art Deco motifs and blocky massing with an emphasis on flat planes and smooth surfaces and with restrained or stylized ornament. Design goals were to promote greater government effectiveness with plans that were modern and efficient. Buildings of this style that were associated with federally-funded public buildings during the New Deal are often referred to as “PWA-Moderne.” Because the

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<sup>15</sup> Moseley, “Tyler County Courthouse,” 65-68.

<sup>16</sup> *Tyler County Commissioners Court Minutes*, Book I, 533.

<sup>17</sup> Works Progress Administration Project Proposal dated Jan 17, 1936. Reproduced in Luhn, *Master Plan*. Appendix D.

Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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Tyler County Courthouse project was a remodel instead of brand new construction, it's not a pure example of this style, yet the intention is clearly evident.

On Feb. 27, 1937 the *Booster* reported that architect Meador from Jasper had conferred with Robert Cunningham, the WPA supervisor, and that although he hoped to begin work that week, he had postponed the work until after the March term of court. An advertisement for sealed bids for subcontractors appeared in the March 11, 1937 issue, and the April 29 issue reported that courthouse offices had been vacated and completion was estimated for August 1.

The budget indicates a total cost of \$44,662.35 including 448 "man-months" of labor. By this time approximately 18% of the county was unemployed, and WPA records indicate that their varied projects employed 491 people. There are no specific records of how many local residents were employed on the courthouse work; however, given that the construction took approximately 8 months, these figures indicate that about 56 people would have been employed full time, or more likely, a larger number part-time. Probably some workers were not locals, since skilled labor was not readily available in the local population, but the boost to local employment was still significant.

The local jobs were no doubt welcome, since economic conditions continued to worsen. In June 13, 1937 the county did not have sufficient funds to pay its bills, and issued scrip, as a result raising taxes for 1937.<sup>18</sup>

The construction took longer than anticipated, and the building was not ready until late October. The *Booster* of Nov. 18, 1937 reported that the official dedication took place on Armistice Day, Nov. 11, drawing 2,500 people to festivities including music by school bands, a speech by congressman Martin Dies, marching by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, official commemoration of the war dead at 11 a.m., a free barbecue, and a football game between Woodville and Chester that evening. The newspaper noted that attendance was less than expected because of rainy weather and "the annual squirrel hunt at Fairview."

Unfortunately, no photographs of the renovations or the structure itself in this period have been located.

### **Cultural Significance**

The Tyler County Courthouse has been the center of county-wide government for its 120 plus year history. In addition, until the 1950's it was the largest building in the county and served as the site of many civic, religious and educational activities.

Its governmental purposes included serving as the locus of the county Commissioners Court and the District Court, which have met continuously in the building since 1891. The District Attorney's office were located there until approximately 2000. The County Tax Office was in the courthouse until the 1970's. The County Clerk and county legal records were housed in the courthouse from 1891 until October 2009. The county sheriff and the jail remained in the courthouse from 1891 until 1985, and the Probation Office until 2015.

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<sup>18</sup> *Tyler County Commissioners Court Minutes*, Book J, 48.

Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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As the major civic structure in the county, the courthouse also served many other non-governmental purposes. Prior to World War II, religious activities were frequent. Revivals took place there, and the interdenominational Men's Bible Study Class met there on Sundays in the 1920's and 1930's. Civic and community-service activities have been common throughout its history. During the depression, free movies were shown in the courtroom, and during World War II, ration stamps were distributed from the courthouse. Observances from Armistice Day and Veteran's Day to July 4th have taken place at the courthouse. At a meeting in the courthouse, the Dogwood Festival, a county-wide celebration held in March and April, was organized for the first time in 1940 by Judge J.E. Wheat, great-grandson of the Dr. Josiah Wheat who donated land for the county seat. Many of the meetings associated with this continuing event have taken place at the courthouse. An annual Christmas event was added in the 1960's with lights and the arrival of a Santa.

The courthouse is closely associated with historic figures from the area and political history. In the 1890s Senator Bronson Cooper from Woodville held political rallies there and met with constituents. Cooper's friend John Henry Kirby, lumber baron, sponsored speakers and events. In the 20th century, notable political figures from the area continued the tradition of political rallies and speeches at the courthouse. Senator John Tower, who attended school briefly in Woodville as a child, campaigned there during his run against Lyndon B. Johnson in 1960. Clyde E. Smith, a native son who ultimately served on the Texas Supreme Court from 1950-66, began his legal career as Tyler County Attorney in 1920 and conducted campaigns at the courthouse throughout his long career. Allan Shivers, Governor of Texas from 1949-56, was another native son closely associated with this structure. His father Robert Andrew Shivers, an attorney, served for a time as County Judge, so Allan knew the courthouse well. After law school and military service, Allan Shivers maintained a home in Tyler County, and he campaigned there and spoke frequently at events throughout his political career from 1946 when he was elected Lt. Governor until his retirement at the end of 1956. One notable event was the campaign rally held at the courthouse for Dwight Eisenhower's Presidential campaign in 1952 at which Shivers urged Texas Democrats to revolt the party and support Ike.

Yet another significant person connected to the courthouse is James E. Wheat. J.E. Wheat (1887-1968), a native of the county and great-grandson of Dr. Josiah Wheat who donated the land for the county seat, was a local attorney and civic advocate. Wheat served as County Attorney with offices in the courthouse. He is notable as a tireless historian and for his groundbreaking advocacy during the 1950s for the preservation of Texas' historical heritage. Wheat was the first president of the Texas State Historical Survey Committee established by the 53rd legislature and Governor Allan Shivers in 1953.<sup>19</sup> Subsequently he served as President of the Texas Historical Foundation. On Jan 17, 1960, the *Austin American Statesman* said of him, "Many individuals are deeply interested in the preservation of Texas' historical heritage, but it is doubtful if any are moreso than Woodville's James E. Wheat, president emeritus of the Texas State Historical Survey Committee and the subsequent Texas Historical Foundation."

In this capacity he was instrumental in the establishment of the historical marker program in Texas, a foundational public outreach effort which has promoted awareness of historical sites statewide. In addition, James Wheat was a historical researcher and the founder in 1940 of the Tyler County Dogwood Festival, a local

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<sup>19</sup> Truett Latimer and Laurie E. Jasinski, "TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/mdt17>), accessed October 13, 2014. Uploaded on June 15, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

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event which has continued to the present. His other public positions, as director of the State Bar of Texas, director of the East Texas Chamber of Commerce, and director of the Houston branch of the Federal Reserve Bank from 1944-99, all allowed him to advocate for historic preservation in Texas.<sup>20</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The Tyler County Courthouse which stands today retains elements of the 1891 building alongside massive changes wrought in the depression. The result is an amalgam which reflects the design sensibility of two quite different eras, but faithfully represents the span of time in which it has served as the seat of government and the center of civic and community identity for the county.

Since 1891, this building has served as the headquarters of Tyler County government, an important administrative division of Texas state government. County and district officials have administered justice in these walls, as well as made important decisions regarding taxes, records, licenses, roads, hospitals and numerous other matters of import to civic life. The courthouse stands as a symbol of county government and represents the heart of public life for the community. The significance of the Tyler County Courthouse is enhanced as an example of a WPA-sponsored project intended to modernize an older facility. The 1930s renovations associate the building with an important public works effort aimed at improving local government buildings, alleviating unemployment, and stimulating the local economy through federal and local funding partnerships.

The State of Texas designated the Tyler County Courthouse a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark in 2000. It is now nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Politics/Government with a period of significance ranging from 1891, which corresponds to the original date of construction, to 1965, the fifty-year threshold for eligibility at the time of nomination.

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<sup>20</sup> Diana J. Kleiner, "WHEAT, JAMES E.," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fwh59>), accessed January 29, 2015. Uploaded on June 15, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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Tyler County Commissioners Court Minutes





Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

Map 3: Scaled Google Earth map depicts nominated property's coordinates and approximate boundary.



Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

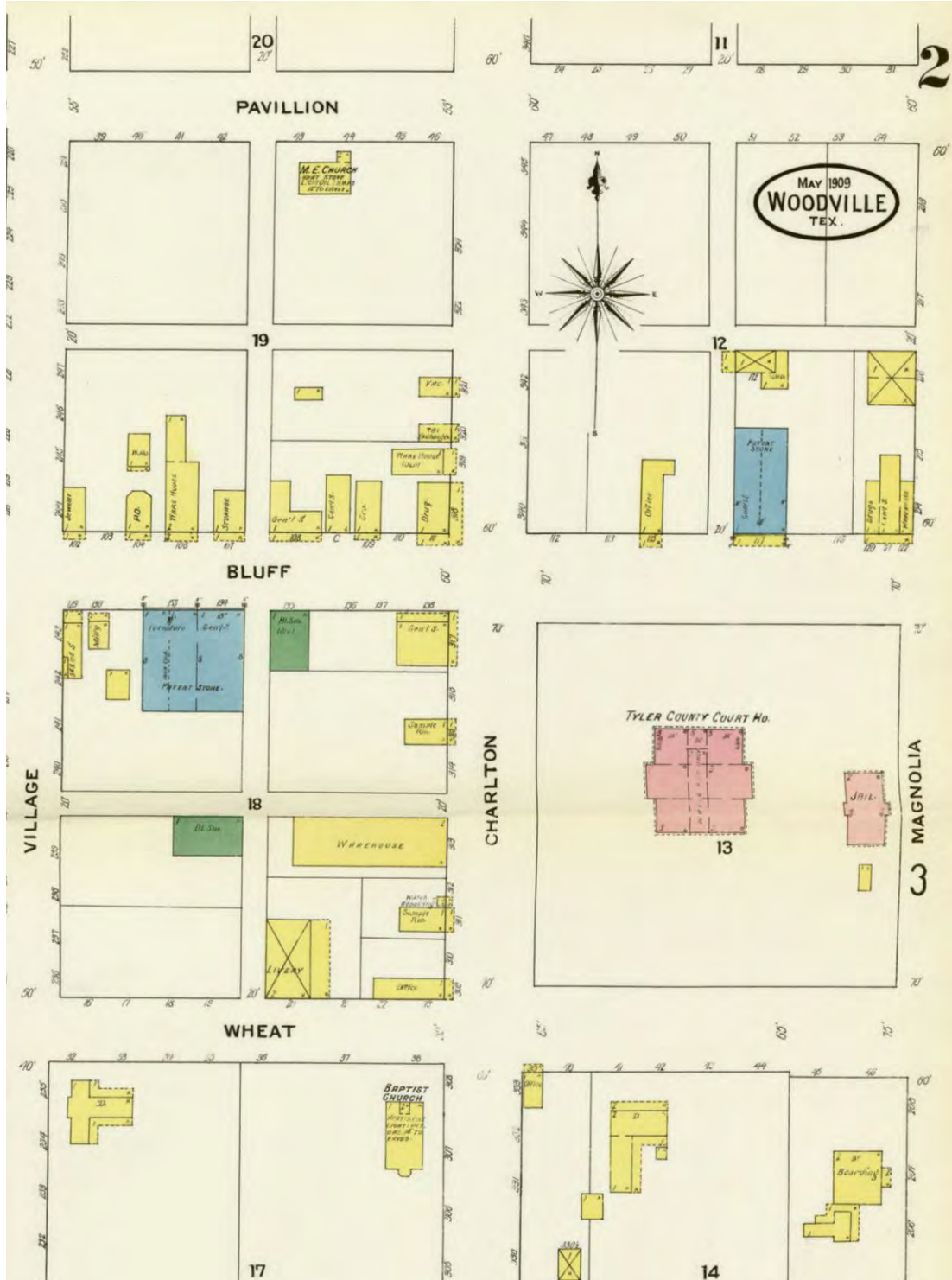
Map 4: Google Earth map depicts 1 contributing resource and 3 noncontributing resources.



Resource Name	Status	Original Construction	Alterations
Tyler County Courthouse	Contributing	1891	1937, renovations and additions
Old Jail Foundation	Noncontributing	1889	1937, jail building demolished
Domino Hall Foundation	Noncontributing	1973	2005, building demolished
Annex (D.A. Office Bldg.)	Noncontributing	1979	N/A

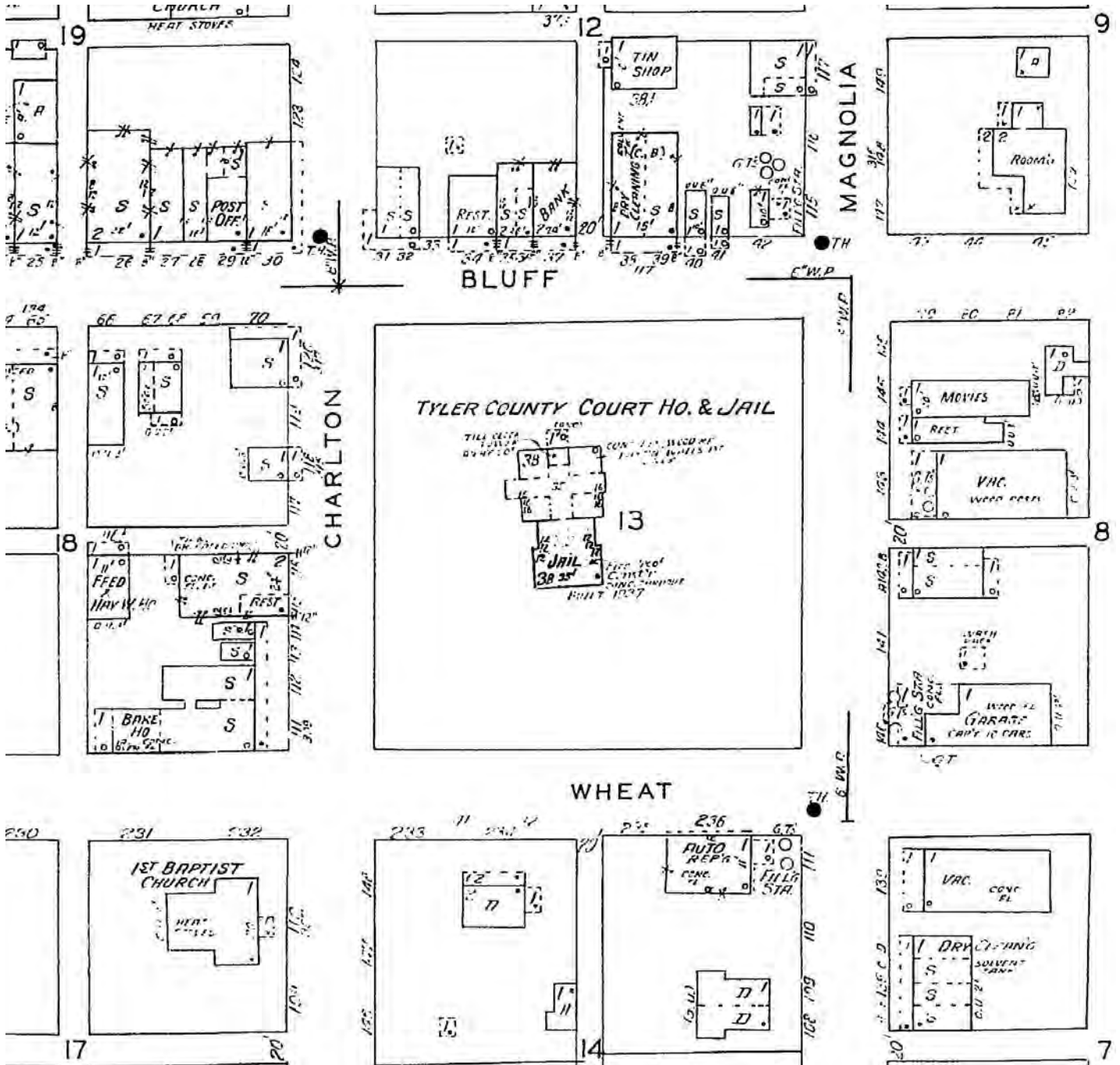
Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

Figure 1: Sanborn Fire Insurance map, 1909, detail.



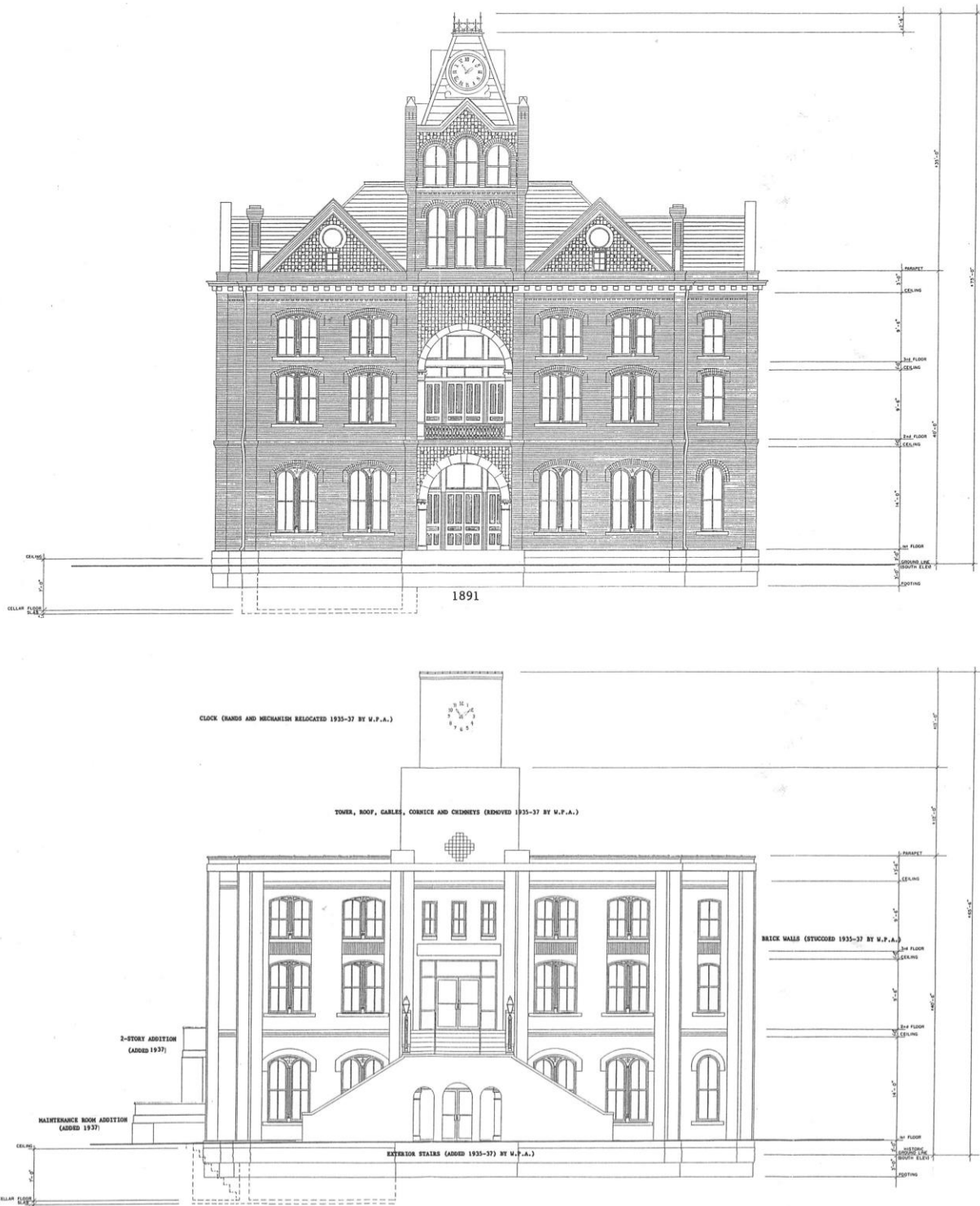
Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

Figure 2: Sanborn Fire Insurance map, November 1938, detail.



Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

Figures 3 and 4: Historic (top) and existing (bottom) north elevations. Drawings from Luhn's *Master Plan for Restoration/Renovation of the 1891/1935 Tyler County Courthouse* (2000).



Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

Figures 5 and 6: Historic (top) and existing (bottom) west elevations. Drawings from Luhn's *Master Plan for Restoration/Renovation of the 1891/1935 Tyler County Courthouse* (2000).

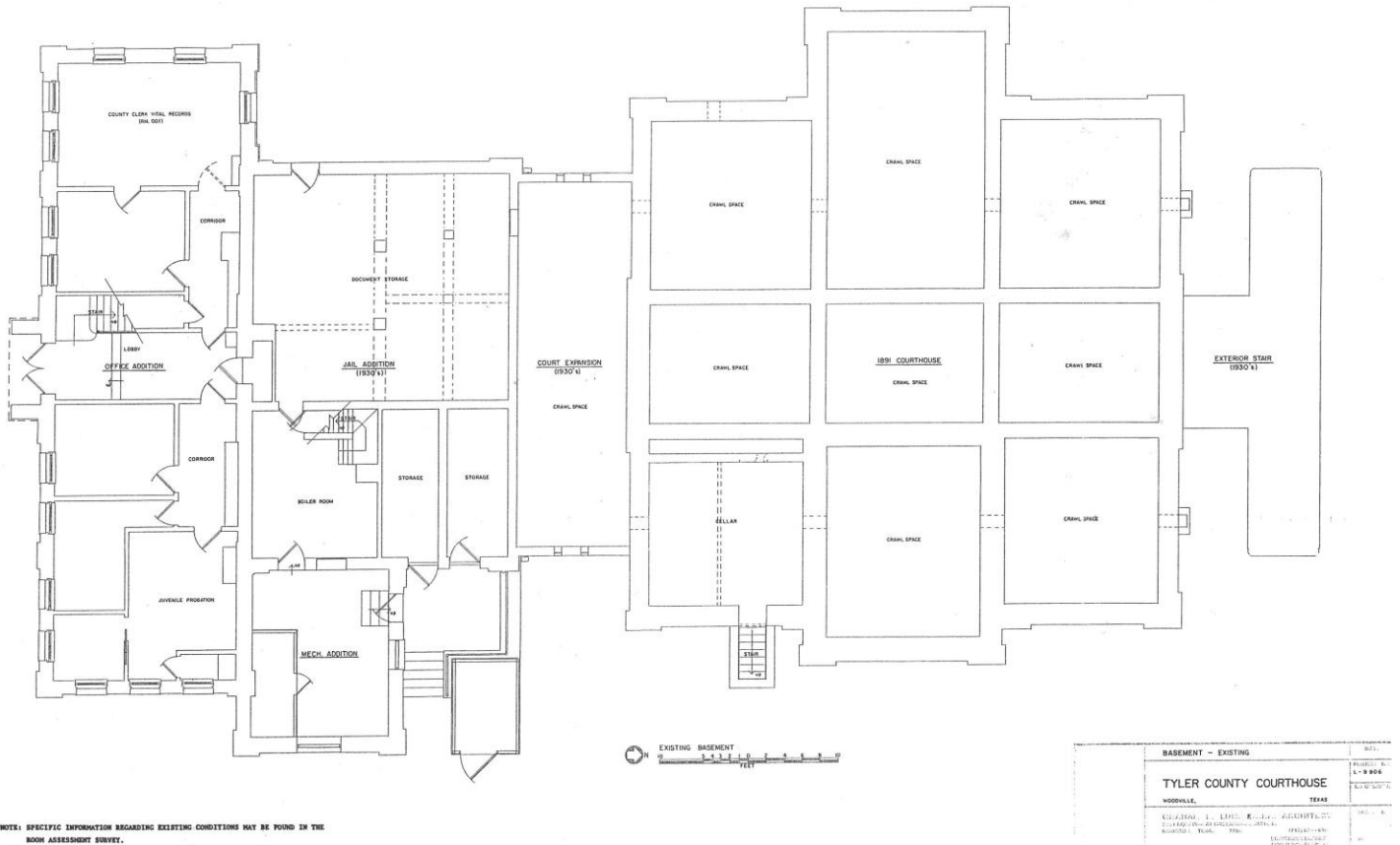


\* NOTE: SPECIFIC INFORMATION REGARDING EXISTING CONDITIONS MAY BE FOUND IN THE BOOK ASSESSMENT SURVEY.

TYLER COUNTY COURTHOUSE	
WOODVILLE, TEXAS	6-1906
DATE OF SURVEY	1994
DATE OF PHOTOGRAPHY	1994
BY	W.P.A.
REVISION	1994

Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

Figure 7: Existing floor plan, basement level. Drawing from Luhn's *Master Plan for Restoration/Renovation of the 1891/1935 Tyler County Courthouse* (2000).



\* NOTE: SPECIFIC INFORMATION REGARDING EXISTING CONDITIONS MAY BE FOUND IN THE ROOM ASSESSMENT SURVEY.

Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

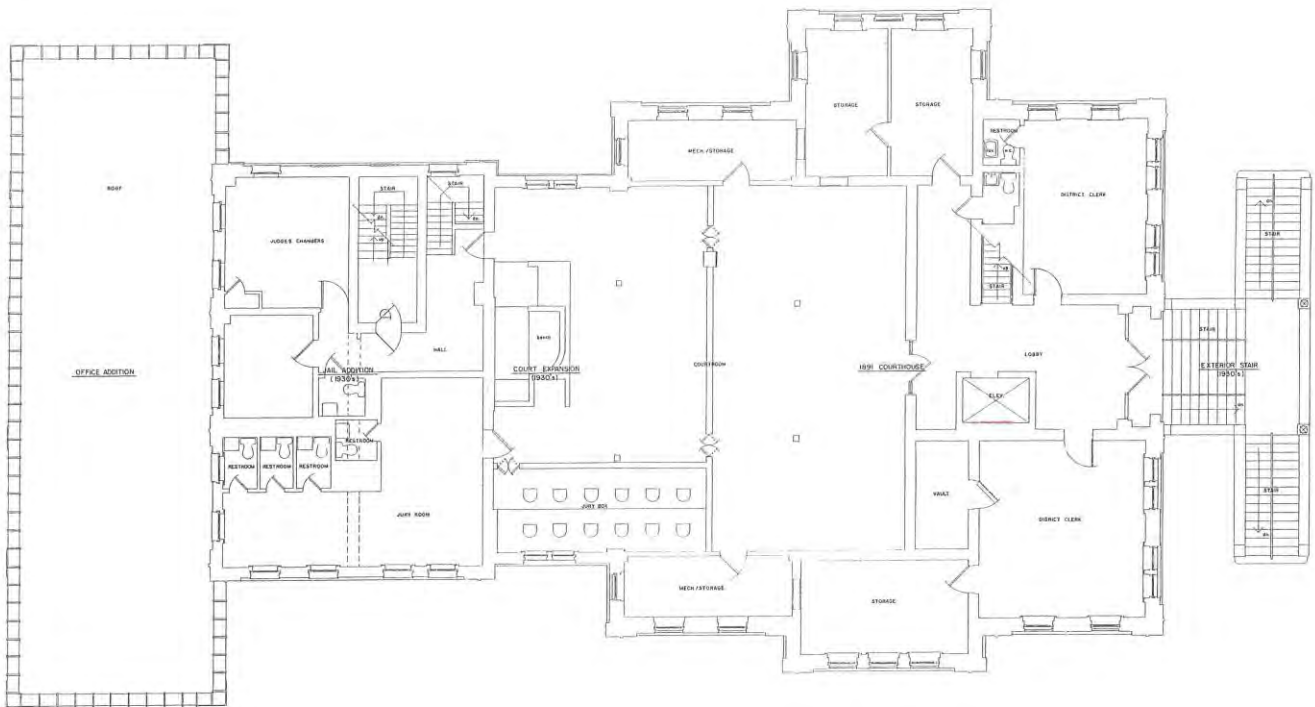
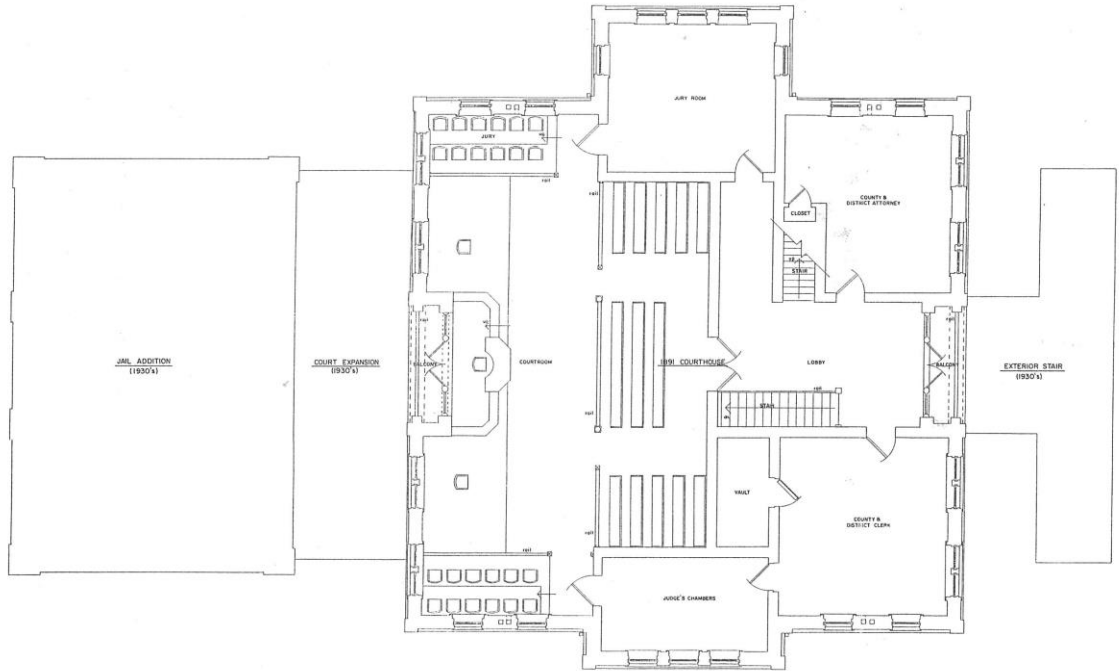
Figures 8 and 9: Historic (top) and existing (bottom) first floor plans. Drawings from Luhn's *Master Plan for Restoration/Renovation of the 1891/1935 Tyler County Courthouse* (2000).





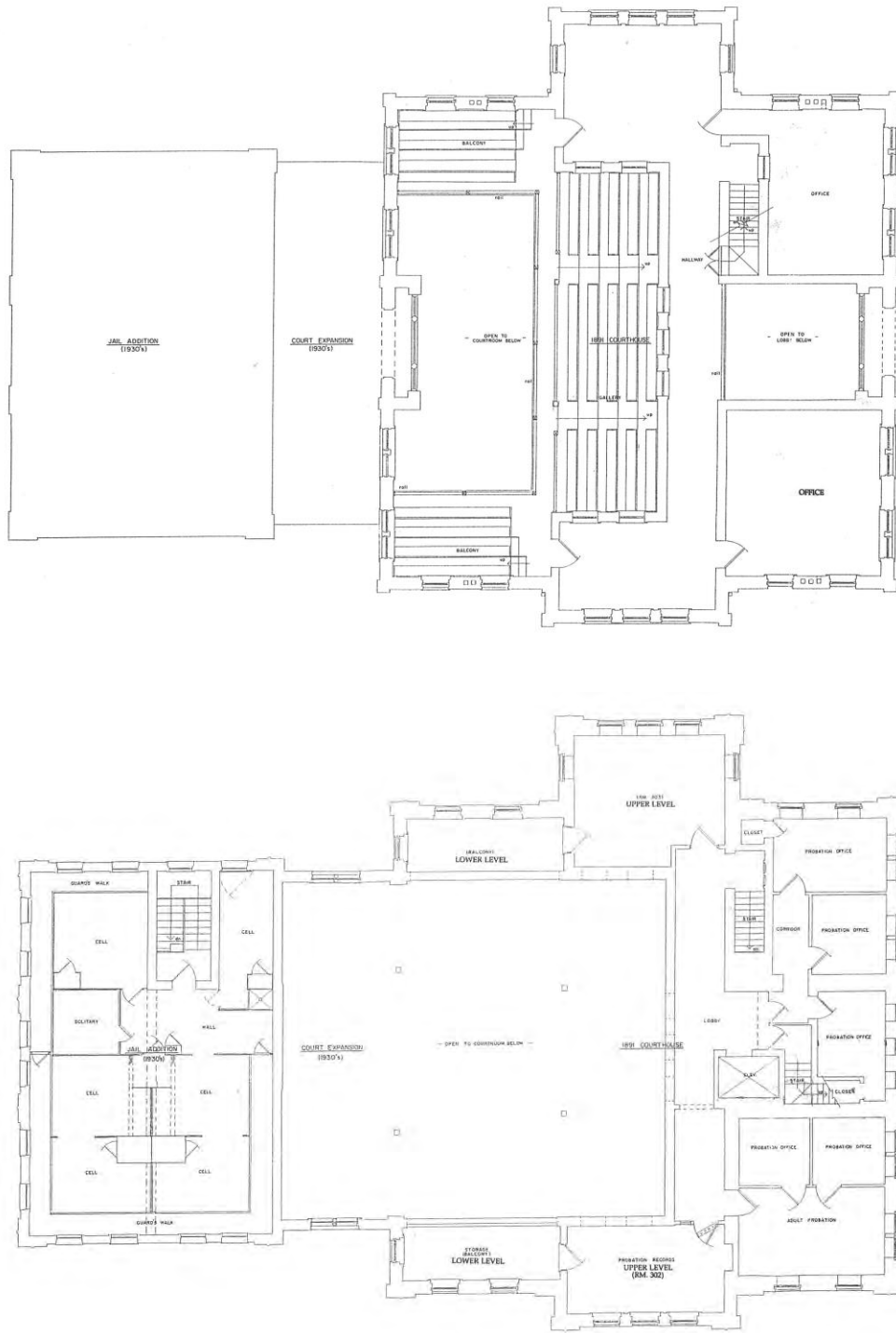
Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

Figures 10 and 11: Historic (top) and existing (bottom) second floor plans. Drawings from Luhn's *Master Plan for Restoration/Renovation of the 1891/1935 Tyler County Courthouse* (2000).



Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

Figures 12 and 13: Historic (top) and existing (bottom) third floor plans. Drawings from Luhn's *Master Plan for Restoration/Renovation of the 1891/1935 Tyler County Courthouse* (2000).



Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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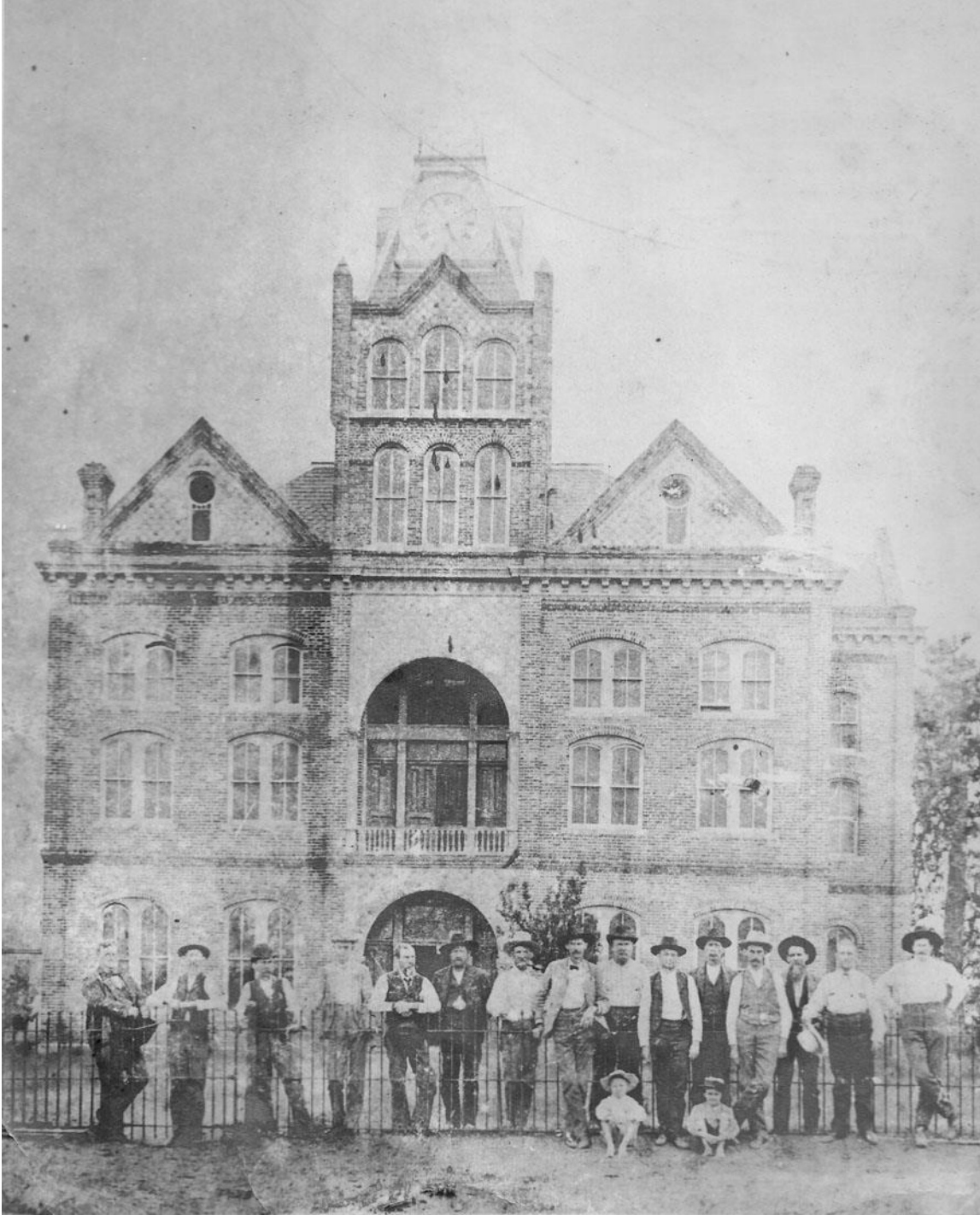
Figure 14: Courthouse soon after completion in 1891.



Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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Figure 15: North elevation of courthouse, date unknown.



Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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Figure 16: Courthouse and jail as seen in the early 1900s. The jail was demolished in 1937. Only the foundation remains.



Figure 17: Northwest oblique, circa 1940.



Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

Figure 18: Local newspaper announcement of the "new" courthouse dedication ceremony.

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 The Tyler Co. New Court House, Armistice Day

Lets Have the Big Celebration ever in the County of T

Young's Pharmacy	V. F. W.	<p><b>... PROGRAM ...</b></p> <p>E. WHEAT, MASTER OF CEREMONIES</p> <p>9:00 Visitors will be shown through building by Judge Tatum and Commissioners Nellius, Riley, Cruse and Willis.</p> <p>10:00 Introduction of Guests of Honor.              Thos. B. Coe, R. M. Briggs, John H. Kirby, G. E. Richardson, R. E. Biggs, J. Llewellyn, J. M. Combs, A. L. Bevil, C. E. Smith, R. A. Shivers, Thos. F. Coleman, Grover C. Lowe, G. C. Bradfield, Hill C. Durham, J. E. Sturrock, D. P. Rock, J. A. Best, and all former County Officials low living.</p> <p>10:55 Flag Ceremony and Taps.</p> <p>11:00 Address, Martin Dies.</p> <p>12:00 Barbecue.              Beef, Salad, Bread, Pickles and Coffee.</p> <p>2:30 Football Game.              Chester Yellow Jackets vs. Woodville Eagles.</p> <p>9:00 Athletic Council and V. F. W. Dance.</p>	Tyler County Chamber of Commerce	Stryker Drug S
James E. Wheat			Long Bell Lbr Co. Doucette	Clyde E. Smith
Matthews Store	Woodville Athletic Council		C. E. Goolsbee Warren	P. H. Powell
H & H Cash System	Citizens State Bank		Chester Business Men's Club NECHES LBR. CO. FEAGIN & VEAL CHESTER STATE BANK H. W. LEWIS J. A. MANN	Star Cafe
Parsons Service Station	Bracken, Eaves, Kelley and Blanchard		Chester School Faculty	GEO. HAYES, ROBT. McCOY Woodville Dealers Gulf Prod T. C. Rock, Distributor
J. Wood Fain			WOODVILLE SCHOOL FACULTY	J. B. Best
Magnolia Garage	T. O. Sutton & Sons		HILLISTER BUSINESS MEN	COLMESNEIL J. P. Mann
A. E. Pedigo	Sutton & Fain		COMMISSIONERS COURT M. C. TATUM M. F. NELLIUS LOU CRUSE J. E. RILEY SCOTT L WILLI	Adams - Sutton Mercantile Co.
J. H. Fain				First State Bank
Davis Brothers				MEADOWS STORE COLMESNEIL GIN OGDEN SERVICE STA. & CAR RILEY'S SINCLAIR SERVICE STATION
J. H. Evans			Woodville Tailor	
Tyler County Booster				

Hill Durham Mrs. B. F. Hughes J. B. Reid G. C. Lowe Mrs. J. F. Barclay O. U. Woodard Western Auto Associate Mistr

**AND THE COURT HOUSE OFFICIALS AND THEIR SEVERAL EMPLOYEES**

Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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Figure 19: Courthouse and office building, circa 1980.



Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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## **CURRENT PHOTOS OF THE NOMNATED PROPERTY**

*The following photos were also submitted to the National Park Service as high quality digital files.*

TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0001.tif  
North (primary) façade. Camera facing approximately southwest.





Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0002.tif  
North (primary) façade. Camera facing approximately southeast.



Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0003.tif  
Detail of primary entry on north façade. Camera facing east.



Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0004.tif

Detail of north entrance on ground floor. Camera facing approximately southeast.



TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0005.tif

South (rear) façade. Camera facing approximately northwest.



Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0006.tif  
East façade. Camera facing approximately northwest.



Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0007.tif

Detail of ground floor entry hall. Taken from just inside the north entry. Camera facing south.



Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0008.tif

Detail of interior door located within the oldest part of the courthouse, ground floor. Camera facing approximately southwest.



Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0009.tif  
Interior of second floor courtroom. Camera facing approximately southwest.



TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0010.tif  
Interior of ground floor lobby of the south entrance. Camera facing north.



Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0011.tif  
Noncontributing annex. Camera facing southeast.



TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0012.tif  
Noncontributing foundation of the domino hall. Camera facing west.





Tyler County Courthouse, Woodville, Tyler County, Texas

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TX\_Tyler County\_Tyler County Courthouse\_0013.tif  
Noncontributing foundation of the old jail. Camera facing approximately east.





TYLER COUNTY COURT HOUSE

11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10





TYLER COUNTY COURT HOUSE

11 12 1 2  
10 9 8 7 6 5 4  
3



No Smoking



COMMISSIONERS  
300 W BLUFF  
ROOM  
100  
102  
106  
110  
203  
SHERIFF  
702 N.  
TAX ASSESSOR  
1001  
VETERAN  
201





CLERK'S  
COURT  
SOUTH















CRIMINAL  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

RESTROOMS  
♿



Lindsey B. Whisenant  
Attorney  
409-283-8288  
Brad Elrod  
Attorney at Law

19 J.B. B...

COUNTY CLERK

STOP



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Tyler County Courthouse

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Tyler

DATE RECEIVED: 4/03/15  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5-11-15  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4-24-15  
DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/19/15

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000247

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 5-18-15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

**TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

*real places telling real stories*



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

FROM: Carlyn Hammons  
Texas Historical Commission

RE: New Submission, National Register Nomination  
Tyler County Courthouse, Tyler County, TX

DATE: March 30, 2015

The following materials are submitted:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Original National Register of Historic Places form and electronic locational data (in .kmz format) on CD. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for <u>Tyler County Courthouse</u> to the National Register of Historic Places. <i>ch</i>
	Resubmitted nomination.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CD with thirteen (13) TIFF photograph files.
	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:

