

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

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received DEC 2 1985

date entered JAN 14 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections**1. Name**historic The Historic Resources of Georgetown, Texas (Partial Inventory of Architectural  
and/or common and Historic Properties)**2. Location**

street &amp; number The city limits and extra-jurisdiction of Georgetown N/A not for publication

city, town Georgetown N/A vicinity of

state Texas code 048 county Williamson code 491

**3. Classification**

| Category   | Ownership                                 | Status   | Present Use   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district                      | <input type="checkbox"/> public           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> building(s)                   | <input type="checkbox"/> private          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                          | <b>Public Acquisition</b>                 | <b>Accessible</b>                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object                        | N/A in process                            | N/A yes: restricted                                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> multiple resources | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted           | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial                   |
|  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> no                          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military          |
|  |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> museum                       |
|  |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> park                         |
|  |   |  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence |
|  |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> religious                    |
|  |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific                   |
|  |   |  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation    |
|  |   |  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant     |

**4. Owner of Property**

name See individual site forms and Belford Historic District Owner list

street &amp; number N/A

city, town N/A N/A vicinity of N/A state N/A

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Williamson County Courthouse

street &amp; number Public Square

city, town Georgetown state Texas

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**title Texas Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible? N/A yes ☐ nodate Survey 1983-84, 1970 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Texas Historical Commission P.O. Box 12276

city, town Austin state Texas 78711

## 7. Description

|                                    |                                       |                                    |  |                             |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>Condition</b>                   |                                       | <b>Check one</b>                   | <b>Check one</b>                       | x see individual site forms |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input type="checkbox"/> original site |                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good      | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins        | <input type="checkbox"/> altered   | <input type="checkbox"/> moved         | date _____                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair      | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed    |                                    |  |                             |
| x see individual site forms        |                                       | x see individual site forms        |  |                             |

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Georgetown is an educational, local retail, and county government center of about 10,000 people in Williamson County. Varied topography, soils, and vegetation are characteristic of this area where surveyors laid out the city grid in 1848 near the confluence of the three branches of the San Gabriel River. The community has grown methodically, though during the last quarter of the nineteenth century a booming economy precipitated rapid economic expansion and, in turn, substantial physical growth. Georgetown's well-preserved, built landscape graphically illustrates the development of a small Texas farming community. The architecture of the few decades following settlement was reminiscent of traditional forms in the American Upland South and Deep South, native regions of most area settlers. A continuum of vernacular architecture from the settlement period forward permeates the city and binds disparate historic elements from more than three quarters of a century. Numerous permutations of vernacular frame dwellings and limestone commercial and institutional buildings fill out the cityscape. Prolific local builder C.S. Belford and his chief competitor, C.S. Griffith, were responsible for much of the balance of Georgetown's domestic architecture of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the stylized houses of prominent families and the thoughtfully laid out rows of popular builder's bungalows. Regionally acclaimed architects C.H. Page Brothers, of Austin, were the favored out-of-town designers and left their distinctive mark on several important institutional buildings in Georgetown. Two National Register Districts, the Williamson County Courthouse Historic District and the University Avenue-Elm Street Historic District, and five individually listed properties already distinguish important historic areas associated with the period of economic growth. This document extends the Williamson County Courthouse Historic District boundary, and describes the salient features of a significant collection of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century dwellings in the Belford Historic District, and provides a context for 52 exceptional individual properties here nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

### Description

Georgetown, seat of the Williamson County government, is located just west of the geographic center of this central Texas county. It is one of three sizable municipalities in the county, the other two being Taylor, 15 miles to the east and Round Rock, bordering Georgetown on the south. Until recently Georgetown was a slow-paced, small farming community on the northern edge of the rapidly growing metropolitan area of the state capital, Austin, 30 miles to the south. The 1980 population of 9,468 has

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begun to swell as the city continues to annex new subdivisions to the south and west where rapid growth is underway.

Situated east of the rocky bank of the San Gabriel River, this city is one of several positioned along the Balcones Escarpment, a geological formation that slices through central Texas from north to south. The craggy hills covered by juniper and oak, as well as the plateaus to the west of the escarpment, abut the gently rolling blackland prairie that lies to the east of this 136-year-old settlement. The natural resources that attracted early settlers still abound: water from the rivers, creeks and springs; a variety of soil conditions for farming and ranching operations; an adequate, though not abundant, timber supply; and stone for construction.

Long before a permanent settlement was established, tribes of nomadic Native Americans camped along the San Gabriel River in the vicinity of present-day Georgetown. Archeological remains located in recent surveys suggest occupation as early as 8,000-6,000 B.C. The earliest known historic inhabitants, who were groups of hunter-gatherers, were later threatened by aggressive Plains Indians. But by the mid-nineteenth century most local Indian tribes had been supplanted by Anglo settlers pioneering the central and western part of the continent, leaving only campsite vestiges of earlier Indian occupation.

In 1848, Mathias Wilbarger and David C. Cowan surveyed a town site for the new county seat of Williamson County. George W. Glasscock, Sr., who donated the land, stipulated that the settlement carry his name; accordingly, it was dubbed Georgetown. The surveyors platted a 52-block grid on high ground near the confluence of the three tributaries of the San Gabriel River. The town planners designated a public square in the southeast quadrant of the townsite as the center of commercial activity with narrow lots fronting on the streets surrounding the square. The original plan shows that most other blocks in the town were divided into eight parts, oriented east-west, and intended for residential use. The near axial grid provided for orderly growth of the young town, which was idyllically situated above the river.

Limited financial and material resources dictated the construction of utilitarian structures during the early decades of settlement. According to local historian Clara Scarbrough, the first settlers of European descent in Williamson County emulated the nomadic Indians' tradition of using available materials to construct temporary structures of animal hides stretched over a tent-like frame of wooden poles. The first permanent structures were simply constructed, unadorned, and of modest proportion. Void of embellishment, these early buildings reflected the architectural

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traditions brought by their builders, most of whom had immigrated from the Upland South and Deep South. Most early uildings were probably of log construction. Extant examples of this type in other parts of central Texas suggest that a variety of construction techniques were utilized for notching and finish details. The sole remaining log dwelling in Georgetown, the Mather House, was moved into the city from rural Williamson County. Unfortunately, its physical and contextual integrity were both destroyed in the relocation and reconstruction, and it is not included in this nomination.

The oldest extant, in-place structures in Georgetown are built of limestone. Several of these mid-nineteenth-century stone dwellings still stand, providing significant information on this type of construction. The oldest dates to about 1860 and attests to the early settlers' confidence in Georgetown and their quest for permanence. Though good-quality limestone was available for ashlar or rubble construction, not all settlers, of course, could afford the luxury of this labor-intensive form of building. Only a single stone mason is listed in the 1850 census, indicating a small demand (or lack of available labor) for such skills at that time. By 1870, however, this number had increased to four while the population had only grown by about 60 percent.

The Harper-Chesser House (Site No. 675) at 1309 College is possibly the oldest stone house remaining in Georgetown. The ashlar limestone residence, circa 1860, began as a one-story, center-passage, two-room house built atop a raised basement. Originally oriented to the south, a dominating two-story frame addition of about 1890 established a new main entry on the west. The craftsmanship demonstrated in this house reveals refined masonry techniques in the cut structural blocks, windows and door lintels, and sills. The McMurray House (Site No. 541) is believed to have been erected in 1868 by C.A.D. Clamp, a German immigrant who also built the First Presbyterian Church. This two-room house is unusual in the central positioning of the fireplace between the two rooms, as opposed to locating the chimneys at the end elevations, which is more typical in early Texas dwellings. Like the Harper-Chesser House, the McMurray House has a substantial addition, a one-and-a-half-story Victorian appendage, which changed the orientation from south to west in 1899. The McKnight-Ebb House (Site No. 275) at 502 W. 18th is another altered stone dwelling, circa 1870, though the modifications are limited to the interior. Owners blocked the original front entry into a center-passage sometime in the early to middle part of the twentieth century, changing the two-room, center-hall plan into an interior arrangement of smaller rooms. The most intact and imposing nineteenth-century stone dwelling in the Georgetown vicinity is the J.J. Johnson House (Site No. 900), which was constructed in the 1860s by a Swedish immigrant, south of the city near Rabbit Hill Road. This

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house is a typically arranged center-hall dwelling, but the interior spaces are exceptionally large relative to other contemporary structures. Its stone lean-to on the west elevation is also an atypical feature. Though the house has a stucco coating and is encircled with auxiliary structures ranging in age from the late 1800s to a recently added mobile home, the historic ambience remains intact.

The symbolic and very real notion of permanence that masonry buildings connote was not limited to residential structures. Citizens of Williamson County publicly expressed their optimism for the area's future by constructing their third courthouse in the 1850s, described in Land of Good Water by Clara Scarbrough as "fifty feet square, two stories high with walls two feet thick, to be erected on the public square." In August 1854, specifications were altered to include a hipped roof, upper walls of rock as in the lower story, and plastered outside walls (Scarbrough 1973: 152). The promoters of Georgetown College demonstrated their confidence in the future of their institution and its host city by erecting a two-story stone structure in 1870-71. This good-faith measure soon enticed Soule (later Southwestern) University to relocate in Georgetown when the facility was offered as a new home.

Successful business proprietors also began to demonstrate their faith in Georgetown and their personal achievement by building stylish business houses. Unassuming stone edifices replaced earlier frame structures in the 1870s. Schaffer constructed his livery building (Site No. 460) at 711 Main in about 1870. The stonemason's craftsmanship added a simple elegance to the stalwart image the building projected. The Steele-Makemson Building (Site No. 368) at 800 Main, contemporary with the Schaffer Building, also suggests stability with its sturdy stone walls and simple detailing. Both these structures are located in the Williamson County Courthouse Historic District, which was listed on the National Register in 1977.

Little documentation exists on the city's frame structures built prior to the 1870s. It is assumed that as families prospered, they replaced their log or temporary dwelling with more substantial domiciles. A frame house was the likely choice, even though locally milled lumber was not available until the 1889s. Mills located in Bastrop, 40 miles southeast of Georgetown, were the probable source of lumber. The Colonel J.T. Coffee House (Site No. 756) on James Street is reputedly the oldest structure in Georgetown, and was perhaps built in the 1850s. The evolution of this house is difficult to ascertain, but the materials and form suggest a mid nineteenth-century construction date. The earliest portion of the house is connected by a hyphen to another dwelling erected later in the century. The construction of the Coffee House is comparable to an 1850s house described in an article appearing in the Williamson County Sun in 1915,

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which says that "the sills and much of the framing was of oak, hewn with a broad axe. They were morticed and put together with big woden [sic] draw pins." Another early frame structure that has been documented, but which is no longer standing, is mentioned by Clara Scarbrough in her account of Williamson County history. Known as the Patterson House, it was a typical frame dwelling that was purchased by the county in 1851 for use as a temporary courthouse.

Out of a total population of 200, five carpenters were listed in the 1850 census of Williamson County, indicating that some construction activity was taking place in the community, perhaps much of it being done by the property owners themselves. The number of carpenters increased to eight in 1860, but declined to six in 1870. Since most of these carpenters came to Williamson County from the southern United States (primarily Virginia, Georgia, and South Carolina), the structures they built reflect traditional building forms of that area. The Lane-Riley House (Site No. 657) at 1302 College, exemplifies such ideas. This one-and-a-half-story, center-hall house has a symmetrical primary elevation creating a simple, but formal, appearance. Vertical boards with battens were used as finish material, a common and easily applied sheathing. Although a local lumber mill may have been operating in the 1870s, positive evidence of such an operation is not available until the mid-1880s, when two mills were providing local builders with materials.

Georgetown's earliest commercial buildings were of simple frame construction and clustered around the public square. Carol Kennedy, in her 1983 study of the Georgetown Commercial District for the Main Street Program, reports that

"Georgetown's early 'store houses' as they were called, were usually of wood construction. A typical design was a one or two story gable roofed rectangular structure, with a wooden front wall projecting up above the roof line. This 'false front' would serve as decoration for commercial signage."

Georgetown's slow growth during the mid-nineteenth century did little to expand the original townsite. The Glasscock Addition of 1854 was the only extension to the city during the early years, and it provided a suitable area for residential development on the south and east sides of the original town.

Georgetown's development accelerated during the 1870s. The population began to grow rapidly, as did the area's economy, while changing demographics created an environment conducive for city expansion. New

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buildings, especially public and commercial structures with stylistic pretensions grander than their mid-nineteenth-century predecessors, became part of the built landscape. The university moved and began a new facility in the 1870s; the railroad arrived in the city in the late 1870s, linking Georgetown to new markets and expanding the local market; and the county government constructed a new courthouse in 1878. One aspect of Georgetown—the conservative nature of its agrarian-based economy—remained unchanged. Residential structures were especially revealing of the townspeople's rural roots, as vernacular and simply embellished dwellings continued to be the dominant expression.

Georgetown's original townsite of 1848 was extended between 1870 and 1910 by the development of several new additions. With the exception of the Rucker and Hodges Addition of 1874, on the west side of town, developers preferred to build to the east toward Southwestern University and to the south of the business district. Nineteenth-century additions to Georgetown, named usually for the developer, were the Clamp Addition (1872), the Morrow Addition (1872), the Fleager Addition (1879), the Dalrymple Addition (1879), the Anderson Addition (1879), the Coffee Addition (1879), the Allen Addition (1899), the Snyder Addition (1890), the Southside Addition (1895), the Eubank Addition (1896), the Hart Addition (1899), and the Booty and Leseur Addition (1899). This new territory within the city's jurisdiction tripled the size of the town and centralized the public square, which originally had been at the southeast corner of the original town plat.

As building materials became increasingly available, home builders increased their repertoire. While architectural forms did not yet vary greatly, larger and more elaborately detailed structures began to appear. Builders chose familiar vernacular forms including the two-room plan, the center-hall plan and the L-plan for their dwellings. Other traditional plans like the T-plan and U-plan houses appeared less frequently, but were still a distinctive part of the late nineteenth-century built landscape.

The typical two-room houses built in the 1870s-1890s in Georgetown were frame dwellings with two adjoining rooms of unequal size. Builders used both box-frame and full-frame construction, and covered the structure with weatherboard or board-and-batten sheathing. Almost all the local two-room houses have separate entries into the public and private rooms, with the porches serving as external passageways. The best preserved example of this form in Georgetown is the Bowlen House (Site No. 341) at 1403 Forest. Because of the economy in both construction and space, these houses were constructed from the 1870s to the mid-twentieth century, and continued to meet the spatial and social needs of many families for that time.

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Center-hall houses, typically of one- or one-and-a-half stories in Texas, represented a changing attitude toward spatial relationships within the home. The center passage or hall inserted between the two rooms directed flow and created access to the adjoining rooms. Several frame center-hall houses in Georgetown built during the 1870s-1890s illustrate these principles well, including the dwelling (Site No. 33) at 106 E. 6th, the E.M. Harris House (Site No. 64) at 404 E. 7th, the house (Site No. 201) at 214 W. University, and the Robert Hyer House (Site No. 632) at 904 Ash.

The L-plan dwelling, with its numerous permutations, was the most prevalent traditional house type built in Georgetown in the last quarter of the nineteenth and first decade of the twentieth century. As a form that evolved from two-room and center-hall houses, L-plan houses responded to a need for additional space, emphasis on public areas in the home, and an increased specialization of functions within the structure. Most commonly, local builders crafted one- or two-story frame, center-hall structures with a front protecting ell and integral rear ell, or else added a rear kitchen ell later. The Caswell House (Site No. 128) at 907 E. 9th, the Sansom-Schmalenbeck House (Site No. 543) at 813 Church, the Moses Harrell House at 1001 Church (Site No. 545), the A.W. Hawnen House at 1409 Olive (Site No. 749), the Arnold-Torbet House at 908 Pine (Site No. 714), and the Lockett House (Site No. 183) at 811 E. University are typical examples of the L-plan houses.

The T-plan, cross-plan, and U-plan dwellings appear less frequently. These house designs attempt to codify functions of the household as in the L-plan houses, and in many respects resemble L-plan houses, especially in construction and use of materials. The Patrick House (Site No. 24) at 211 E. 5th is an outstanding example of a U-plan structure while the Price House (Site No. 140) at 209 E. 10th typifies a T-plan dwelling of the late nineteenth century.

The strong vernacular tradition was not diminished by embellishment, use of materials, or the passage of time. Yet simple structures took on an air of pretense as successive architectural influences became vogue. Center-hall houses, with the additions of jigsaw brackets, chamfered porch supports, extravagant window moldings, and (perhaps) a modified roof line, were considered "Italian Villas," but are not to be confused with pattern-book designs for such. L-plan houses—with similar machine-made architectural ornaments of turned columns, spindles, balusters, and imbricated shingles—were stylishly executed, but not considered a named "style" by builders or carpenters of the day. Such dwellings as the Breneke House (Site No. 471) at 1237 Main (in the Belford Historic District) and the Irvine House (Site No. 177) at 409 E. University, were



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attempts at creating a modern home by embellishing it with these latest architectural features.

In contrast, several notable examples of architectural styles atypical of the late 1800s still stand in Georgetown. Public buildings, commercial buildings, and churches illustrate the variety of architectural modes then found in the city, though a few outstanding examples of residential architecture of specific styles also remain. These houses were large structures built during the Victorian period, and were usually frame, asymmetrically amassed, and highly ornamented. The 1879 Dilley-Tinnin House (Site No. 375) at 1220 Austin Avenue, which was listed on the National Register in 1970, is the outstanding surviving expression of Italianate architecture in the city. The ornate Queen Anne home of local builder and lumberman C.S. Belford, constructed in 1895, is also on Austin Avenue (Site No. 376). Its extensive use of turned and jigsawn ornament creates a complex composition of massing and texture. This house, which is in the Belford Historic District, is rivaled in exuberance by houses at 1304, 1308, and 1404 Elm, all constructed around 1895 and listed in the University Avenue-Elm Street National Register Historic District. The designer of the Price House (Site No. 140) at 209 E. 10th utilized Eastlake details in the interior carved woodwork and created a fanciful exterior composition with the application of turned and jigsawn elements.

Appropriate symbolic imagery was skillfully suggested in the construction of several public and ecclesiastical buildings by the use of the period's most popular institutional architectural styles--Gothic Revival, Romanesque and Second Empire. Artisans produced several very successful compositions during this era of local growth in Georgetown. The 1878 Second Empire courthouse, a design by the firm of Preston & Ruffini of Austin, established a prototype for the design of many late nineteenth-century commercial buildings around the public square. The intricately massed stone structure was the three-story centerpiece for highly ornamented Victorian commercial buildings constructed during the following two decades. Also built of limestone, they were similarly detailed with elaborate tin cornices and an occasional corner turret. Growing Southwestern University enlarged its campus with the Second Empire Ladies Annex in 1883 (destroyed by fire in 1925) and an 1890s mansard roofed, two-story addition to the old Main Building in the 1890s [razed in 1923 for the Georgetown High School campus (Site 178)]. The Williamson County Jail (Site No. 421) designed by the architectural firm of Dodson & Dudley of Waco, was another important public structure of the late nineteenth century. This Gothic Revival building, listed on the National Register in 1977 as part of the Courthouse Historic District, has a fortress-like presence created by the heavily rusticated stone walls and crenelated parapet.

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The Gothic Revival style was the traditional choice of the period's designers of ecclesiastical architecture. Five churches, the First Presbyterian, Grace Episcopal, First Methodist, Wesley Chapel A.M.E., and St. John's Methodist, are detailed with Gothic Revival elements. Little more than the lancet-arched windows remain to indicate of the original detailing of the First Presbyterian Church (Site No. 542) at 703 Church Street. The congregation extended the sanctuary, added a belfry, built an education wing, and stuccoed the original stone in major renovations in 1910 and 1954. Because of these alterations, the church is not nominated here for listing in the National Register. Swedish Methodists relocated from a rural site south of Georgetown to a new stone sanctuary (Site No. 174), in town, built in 1906. Grace Episcopal Church (Site No. 224), built at the corner of 10th and Main in 1881, is a frame structure whose form and understated details suggest Gothic Revival influences. The vertical emphasis aimed at moving the eye upward is well expressed in this simple structure. When the congregation of Grace Episcopal relocated in 1955, they chose to move their sanctuary with them and placed it at 1314 E. University. Southwestern University Professor Robert S. Hyer is believed to have designed the intricately detailed, limestone, First Methodist Church (Site No. 206) at 410 E. University. The success of this 1892 design is most evident in the mood created by the repetition of vertical elements including multiple lance arches, two towering spires, buttresses, and steeply pitched roof. The Wesley Chapel, A.M.E. Church (Site No. 11), at 508 W. 4th Street was built by parishioners in 1904. This stately frame sanctuary, along with the limestone St. John's Methodist Church (Site No. 174) at 301 E. University, built in 1906 have subdued details but include the basic components found in pleasing twentieth-century expressions of the Gothic Revival.

Georgetown's economic expansion continued into the twentieth century, creating conditions conducive for physical growth. The construction of new dwellings, stores, churches, and public buildings filled the needs of newly arrived residents, or in some cases replaced outdated structures. According to census records, the city gained about 300 people in the first decade of the 1900s, decreased by 200 between 1910 and 1920 and then began a slow climb upward that continued until the population explosion of the 1970s.

Businessmen of the early 1900s, anticipating the population growth, created additions to the city, primarily to the east and south sides of town. After 1910, the nature of residential development in these new sections changed to something akin to modern subdivisions. Builders planned neighborhoods and groups of structures as cohesive developments.

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Examples are the 1600-1900 blocks of Main Street, which are part of the Belford Historic District.

In spite of strong high-style movements, including the various revival styles, the Prairie School style and the emerging popular bungalow style, vernacular traditions continued into the new century. Craftsmen reduced and simplified the decorative architectural features on existing large and small dwellings, revealing the prevailing vernacular forms. Also, Georgetown builders and homeowners became particularly fond of the one-story, hip-roofed house with three-bay inset porch, as evidenced by the large number remaining today. The Heard House (Site No. 435) at 1602 Main and in the Belford Historic District, and the Easley House (Site No. 741) at 1310 Olive, are both typical examples of this house form. Some owners modernized their nineteenth-century homes by replacing unfashionable jigsawn embellishment and turned posts with scroll brackets and classical columns, such as 308 E. University (Site No. 205) in the University Avenue-Elm Street Historic District (listed in the National Register in 1977). Subtle Neoclassical details were applied in the place of Victorian ornament on two-room, center-hall, and L-plan houses such as the Leake House (Site No. 46) at 313 E. 7th and the Pegues House (Site No. 216) at 904 E. University.

As the city's economy leveled off, the building of grand homes declined for a time. The favored architectural expression for dwellings of the period, Neoclassical Revival, was not utilized to the same extent as popular movements such as the Prairie School and Bungalow styles. The house at 308 E. University was remodeled with an impressive two-level Neoclassical porch, while the neighbors at 302 E. University (Site No. 204--also in the University Avenue-Elm Street Historic District) built an understated Neoclassical house. The President's House (Site No. 190) on the campus of Southwestern University is one of several subtly interpreted versions of Neoclassical Revival houses in the city. It is excluded from this nomination, however, because it has been moved. Other revival styles, popular in America during the early part of the twentieth century--such as Georgian, Gothic and Spanish Colonial--influenced the designers of public, commercial and ecclesiastical architecture in Georgetown, but did not affect the artisans constructing local homes. Builders Belford and Griffith bore out this notion with their simple designs for popular housing, while architectural firms retained from major cities designed the substantial and more complex buildings in Georgetown--those that normally embodied traditional principles of form. The notable exception is Robert Hyer, a physics professor at Southwestern who is given credit for designing the fine Gothic Revival First Methodist Church Sanctuary (Site No. 206) on E. University.

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Both Belford and Griffith apparently utilized their own creativity and the available design vocabulary of the day to compose practical, yet pleasing, domestic architecture. The houses they built were variations of common types, but small details like the particular application of siding, dormer treatment, or massing clearly identified their work. Belford's Prairie Style houses are uniquely eclectic, and had details such as the Tuscan columns on the Sansom House (Site No. 433) at 1252 Main Street. Bungalow style dwellings emerged as a strong force in the 1910s-1930s. Gifted and versatile builder Belford understood this particular form well. He demonstrated his expertise with near precision at the Atkinson House at 911 Walnut Street (Site No. 706), showing his ability to craft a bungalow to a suitable scale, compose the various elements into a harmonious design, and utilize materials and finishes for emphasis.

Institutions—public, private, and commercial—enlarged and modernized their facilities at the peak of the economic boom. Most visible and symbolic was the new county courthouse public officials had built in 1910. Page Brothers Architects of Austin designed the Neoclassical structure, a temple form complete with the requisite cross plan and goddess of liberty on the dome. The five-bay Farmer's State Bank building (Site No. 366) (National Register, Courthouse Historic District, 1977), with its prominent portico facing the courthouse on the west side of the square, was one of the few commercial buildings designed in the Neoclassical style followed the example set by the new county government center. The U.S. Post Office (Site No. 74, in the extension of the Courthouse Historic District) at 113 E. 8th Street and the First Baptist Church (Site No. 467) at 1000 Main, were built later in the same style, but are simpler Neoclassical expressions. The church is not nominated because of modern alterations.

Southwestern University officials added several high-style buildings to the campus during the first two decades of the 1900s. The Gothic Revival Administration Building (National Register, 1975), designed by architects Layton & Raymond, is an elaborate and complex combination of Gothic elements executed creatively in the ornamental limestone. Mood Hall (Site No. 186), listed in the Register in 1975 and designed by C.H. Page Brothers, is also built of limestone. However, it is more simply detailed than the Administration Building. Local public school administrators also attempted to provide the best facilities possible by constructing substantial limestone school buildings, but none of these nineteenth- or early twentieth-century structures remain. Educators continued to seek first-class facilities in their new buildings, and came close to success when they retained the locally popular architectural firm of Page Brothers to design a new high school. These architects produced a modern, one-story, Spanish Colonial Revival structure (Site No. 178) at 507 E. University which was completed in 1923.

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In the decade between 1920 and 1930, the city continued to grow and prosper, adding about 700 persons to the census rolls. The Great Depression stifled Georgetown for a time, as it did much of the nation. The local economy slowed during the entire decade of the 1930s, and the population grew by only 100. After the Depression years, Georgetown regained its momentum as growth and prosperity returned. Very little changed in the physical nature of the city, and the appearance of the commercial district remained essentially as it was during the peak boom years around the turn of the century. Many contemporary residential neighborhoods also stayed virtually unchanged until the 1960s, when Urban Renewal sadly destroyed much of the historical black neighborhood west of downtown. A few modest dwellings still stand, notably the shotgun house (Site No. 299) at 801 West and the Wesley Chapel A.M.E. Church (Site No. 11). The rest of old Georgetown changed little in the following years—until the 1970s when the community's allure and proximity to Austin attracted preservationists, new businesses, and numerous commuter residents.

Survey Methods

The properties included in this multiple-resource nomination were selected after the completion of a comprehensive historic-resource survey of Georgetown and its Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ). The survey effort began with an overview of the study area. Such a step enabled the surveyors to determine the location, type, quantity, and concentrations of historic resources. The Georgetown planning department provided current maps of the area which served as base maps for the overview. All accessible roads were traversed and all pre-1935 structures that retained their historic integrity were examined. The address, brief description, and an approximate date of construction were noted for the identified properties. Also, each site's location was plotted on the base maps. All of these data were then used to generate a master list to serve as the basis for subsequent research and fieldwork.

Upon completion of the overview, the research phase of the survey began. Historical investigation was undertaken at local research centers, such as the city library, the Mood Heritage Museum, and the Barker Texas History Center. The survey historian also scrutinized records at the Williamson County Courthouse, the Georgetown Heritage Society, and the Texas Historical Commission to locate existing reference materials. For recording information on individual sites from such diverse sources as county tax rolls, mechanic's liens, Sanborn insurance maps, and cemetery records, the surveyors designed a Research Data Sheet. Completed forms are filed at the Texas Historical Commission.

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Prior to tax roll investigation, the researcher first determined each property's legal description (city addition as well as block and lot numbers) from city planning department maps. Using the legal description, owners' names and the tax valuations for most properties were traced as far back as 1890. Dramatic fluctuations in property values were noted as possible indicators of improvements occurring in a specific tax cycle. Mechanic's liens were then examined to determine if initial construction or major improvements were planned. These records also revealed the name of the contractors for many structures and the dates of construction. Examination of old Belford Lumber Co. ledgers also generated useful information. Cemetery records filed at the city library provided vital statistics for many of the former property owners which, in turn, enabled the surveyors to examine the obituaries that yielded important historical data. Past issues of the Williamson County Sun, microfilmed and available at the newspaper's offices, were an invaluable source of information not only for obituaries, but general topics as well. Additional information was solicited by sending questionnaires to current property owners.

In the field, the surveyors documented the 902 sites in two ways—with photography and by written analysis. At least one 35 mm black-and-white photograph was taken of each property to provide a single optimum view. For those structures with apparent architectural or historical significance, the "one-shot" views were supplemented by additional views and by 35mm color slide photography. The surveyors also photographed all buildings, regardless of age or condition, in areas with high concentrations of historic structures that might qualify as National Register historic districts.

As the photograph phase was concluding, the surveyors began recording physical information on each property. A description of each structure—including the form, construction materials, details, and condition—was documented on field forms equivalent to the Texas Historical Commission's Historic Sites Inventory form.

Pertinent information recorded by the survey teams and research notes produced by the historian were refined and transferred to Texas Historical Commission survey forms. Each site was then analyzed and categorized into one of two priority ratings. Those ranked as LOW PRIORITY are generally typical, but severely altered, examples of common architectural styles or forms no historic significance. HIGH PRIORITY sites are Georgetown's most important architectural and historic properties. These sites possess significant associations with prominent historical events or persons, are relatively unaltered examples of common building types, or are rare examples of an architectural style or form. All HIGH PRIORITY sites were

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considered for possible inclusion in the multiple resource nomination. More in-depth research was completed on these properties to obtain more accurate information. A detailed analysis of the city's architectural development helped identify common and unusual styles, forms and types, which in turn helped determine the best and least-altered examples of these building types. A final review and evaluation determine which properties were to be included in the multiple-resource nomination.

All sites included or mentioned in the multiple-resource nomination are followed by the survey site number. This designation helps cross-reference survey results with the nominations.

## 8. Significance

| Period  | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below    |  |   |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric          | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion |  |  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499            | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic     | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation                  | <input type="checkbox"/> law                            | <input type="checkbox"/> science             |  |  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture  | <input type="checkbox"/> economics                     | <input type="checkbox"/> literature                     | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture           |  |  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education          | <input type="checkbox"/> military                       | <input type="checkbox"/> social/             |  |  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799            | <input type="checkbox"/> art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering                   | <input type="checkbox"/> music                          | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian        |  |  |  |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce     | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement        | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy                     | <input type="checkbox"/> theater             |  |  |  |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–1934 | <input type="checkbox"/> communications          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation      |  |  |  |  |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> invention                     |   | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)     |  |  |  |  |

**Specific dates** see individual site forms **Builder/Architect** see individual site forms

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The city of Georgetown has been the seat of government for Williamson County since both were founded in 1848. In many ways, Georgetown's development parallels that of numerous similarly sized communities throughout central Texas. However, the establishment and success of Southwestern University, the state's oldest such institution of higher learning, has added a unique and highly significant element to the town's history, character, and way-of-life. Georgetown has grown at a steady pace throughout its history, but its most prosperous period occurred between 1880 and 1900. The town's historic resources reflect many of the styles and types of architecture, both high-styled and vernacular, that were popular in Texas during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Georgetown's economy has been closely linked with agriculture and county government affairs, and the city has been an important retail and commercial center for Williamson County since the mid- 1800s. The majority of people who settled in the community were Anglos who came from the Upland and Lowland South. Swedes comprised the largest European immigrant group, and they settled in the area during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Georgetown boasts one of the state's most intact courthouse squares (listed in the National Register in 1977), and the city's recent participation in the Main Street Project has spurred the rehabilitation of many buildings in the historic district. This nomination is the second part of a three-phase project undertaken by the Georgetown Heritage Society, with financial assistance from the Historic Preservation Fund as administered by the Texas Historical Commission and the city of Georgetown. The intent is to survey, document and preserve the historic resources within the city and its Extra Territorial Jurisdiction. Prior to this nomination, two historic districts and three individual sites had been listed in the National Register. This nomination includes a newly created residential historic district, an additional 52 individual properties, and a one-block extension to the Williamson County Courthouse District.

Williamson County was formed on March 13, 1848 after early settlers in the region successfully petitioned the State Legislature for its creation out of Milam County. The original name was to be San Gabriel, then Clear Water, but eventually, it was named in honor of Robert M. Williamson. (Three-Legged Willie), an early Texas statesman and judge. The Texas State Senate appointed the first county officials, who were then required to select a seat of government for the county within five miles of its center. While meeting under a live oak tree near present-day 9th and Church



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streets, these officials were greeted, according to early Williamson County historian W. K. Makemson, by George W. Glasscock, Sr. Glasscock, along with his partner, Thomas Huling, was a prominent landowner in this and other parts of the state. Glasscock offered to donate a parcel of land which extended from the live oak tree to the banks of the South San Gabriel River if the new town was named in his honor. The county officials agreed and soon commissioned Mathias Wilbarger and David C. Cowan to survey the town site. On July 4, 1848, the first lots of Georgetown were sold. A granite memorial erected in 1930 on the site where Glasscock offered the land commemorates the town's founding.

As the county seat, Georgetown became a hub of activity, attracting residents from nearby regions. The first courthouse, built about 1849, stood on the block due east of the public square. It was built of logs, as were most other structures in the village at that time. County officials soon made plans to erect a more "permanent" stone facility on the public square. The completion of this structure was not realized until 1857, and although plagued with countless structural problems, it stood as an important symbol for the citizens of Georgetown, representing stability and order within the community and the county. It also was the first courthouse to be built on the square as well as was one of the first stone buildings in the city.

Most of the early commercial activity in Georgetown centered around the courthouse square; industrial and manufacturing enterprises were nonexistent. The majority of the businesses in the mid-nineteenth century were services and included such establishments as hotels, stage stops, and blacksmith shops. Because most legal proceedings in the county took place in the courthouse, attorneys established offices near the square. Most merchants also located their businesses on the courthouse square to capitalize on the constant flow of people who came to town on county-government business. At first, these stores offered an extremely limited selection of goods, but the increased prosperity of the merchants and the community as whole, in addition to improvements in transportation, enabled the storekeepers to offer a greater variety of merchandise.

The economy of Georgetown during its settlement period was heavily dependent upon agriculture, and the U.S. census records of 1850, 1860, and 1870 reveal that most people in and around Georgetown worked in farm-related jobs. The land was fertile, especially to the east and south of town, but to become productive, it had to be cleared. The farms were generally small in size, and the farmers, working to become self-sufficient, grew such staple crops as wheat and corn to sustain their basic

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needs. Labor-intensive cash crops such as cotton were rare, as was the institution of slavery.

Some of the farms in the Georgetown area were located just beyond the original town site. As the city expanded, many were absorbed into the town, their lands partitioned and their homesteads often destroyed. The Col. J.T. Coffee House (Site No. 756) at 1403 James Street is one of the few extant examples of a farmhouse of this period. Part of a large farm that grew a variety of crops, the Coffee House was built as early as the 1860s, and a large addition was constructed in 1889. Today it stands near the base of the city's water tower in a neighborhood of 1940s and 1950s tract housing. The Coffee House does retain some of its original rural character because it sits on an approximately 1.5-acre plot of land. Another example is the McKnight-Ebb House (Site No. 275), which was probably built in the 1870s. It is presently surrounded by modern public housing units.

The physical development of Georgetown proceeded at a slow but steady pace during the middle of the nineteenth century. According to estimates from census records, the town's population had risen to about 320 individuals by 1870. The city itself almost doubled in area when the Glasscock Addition (developed by George Glasscock, Sr.) was added to the original town site in 1854.

Because no lumberyards existed in Georgetown during its settlement period, the task of erecting buildings was left to individual craftsmen. Carpenters were, by all accounts, the most prevalent group in the building trades, indicating that the vast majority of the buildings were of frame construction. The wood likely came from Bastrop, an early lumber center in Texas located about 40 miles southeast of Georgetown. Most of the early carpenters moved to Williamson County from Tennessee, Kentucky, South Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia, and only a few European-born carpenters worked in the town. C.A.D. Clamp was a Prussian who had come to Georgetown in 1851, and is one of only two early craftsmen that have well-documented examples of their work in the town. The other artisan was carpenter J.J. Cluck whose residence (Site No. 503) still stands at 814 Church Street. Clamp, along with W.I. Anderson and Richard Sansom, operated a hardware store at the northeast corner of the square. Although involved with the construction of a number of structures including the 1857 courthouse and the Presbyterian Church (Site No. 542) at 703 Church Street, Clamp's most significant project is the McMurray House at 611 Church Street (Site No. 541). This finely crafted, one-story stone structure was built about 1868, according to local historian Clara Scarbrough. Its central interior chimney is unusual among the mid nineteenth-century dwellings in Georgetown.

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and, in fact, is an extremely common feature on houses throughout all of Texas. Most residences of the period had exterior gable-end chimneys, such as those of the Harris House (Site No. 64) at 401 E. 7th St.

Like most of central Texas, the Georgetown area was a melting pot for people with various geographical origins and ethnic backgrounds. A substantial number had come from such midwestern states as Indiana and Ohio, although the majority settled from the southern United States. Most came from the Upland South, including Tennessee, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Arkansas, but others arrived from Alabama, South Carolina, and Georgia. Despite the strong southern composition of the population, Georgetown and Williamson County had few slaves, and this was reflected in the county's vote against secession from the Union in 1861.

While large numbers of German immigrants settled in Texas' Hill Country, few Europeans moved to Georgetown during the mid-nineteenth century, although a few Swedish settlers arrived in the 1850s. For the most part, the Europeans settled in the rural areas between Georgetown and Round Rock, where they soon cultivated the fertile land of the Black Prairie. Only a small number of the old Swedish farmsteads have survived, and even fewer have remained within the same family. The most intact example is the J.J. Johnson Farm off Rabbit Hill Road. According to its present owner, himself a direct descendant of the original owners, the two-story stone house (Site No. 900) was built in 1860; it remains an extremely important link to this early period of Georgetown's historical development.

While the controversy of secession dominated state politics during the late 1850s and early 1860s, the people of Georgetown and Williamson County helped to lead the fight to keep Texas in the Union. Then-governor Sam Houston, who strongly opposed withdrawal from the Union, is reported to have come to Georgetown often during this period to discuss strategy with the many antisecessionists of the area. A state-wide election was held in 1861 to resolve this issue, and Williamson County was one of only a few counties in Texas to vote against secession. When war erupted, however, the citizens of Georgetown supported the Confederacy, and many joined the army, serving for the duration of war. Although the town itself was not directly affected by the war, the general economic chaos and slow rebuilding process that the state and the entire South experienced during the 1860s and 1870s hampered the city's development.

Following Reconstruction, Georgetown experienced an era of rapid growth that lasted into the first decade of the twentieth century. The small pioneer village with an estimated population of 320 in 1870 was transformed into an active bustling community of 2,790 by 1900, an increase

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of over 800 percent. A number of events contributed to this era of prosperity, although the single most important factor was the establishment of Texas (later Southwestern) University in 1873.

Early residents recognized the need for educational facilities, and by 1852 the Georgetown Male and Female Academy was holding sessions. It was, in the words of educator Dr. C.C. Cody, as cited by Clara Scarbrough, "nothing conspicuous." Efforts to establish another school, Georgetown College, appeared to be successful when work began in 1870 on a two-story limestone building amidst great fanfare and celebration. The building was located at the site of the Old Georgetown High School (Site No. 178) on E. University Avenue. As the structure neared completion, backers of the college learned that Soule University of Chappell Hill, supported by the state's six conferences of the Methodist Church, was to be relocated and consolidated with the church's other schools in Texas, including Rutgersville College chartered in 1840 by the Republic of Texas. Leading citizens of Georgetown recognized the benefits that the university could bring to the community, and by offering all of the newly completed facilities of Georgetown College, they successfully lobbied for the Methodist school's relocation to their city. In October of 1873, the school officially opened. At first known as Texas University, its name was changed to Southwestern in 1875 to avoid confusion with the then-planned, state-supported University of Texas in nearby Austin.

Southwestern University initially admitted only men, but by 1878 women were allowed to enroll. Female students originally met in the basement of the First Presbyterian Church (Site No. 542) at 703 Church Street, but in 1879 a two-story frame structure was built for them on the north side of the present-day 100 block of W. University Avenue. More permanent facilities were provided in 1889, when prominent citizens raised funds to erect the two-story stone Ladies Annex. In 1925 a devastating fire gutted the building, which was then replaced with Laura Kuykendall Hall (Site No. 188).

While emerging as an early educational center in Texas, Georgetown was involved in one of the state's earliest and most famous industries, the cattle business. Noted Texas Historian Walter Prescott Webb (1951:557) wrote "Then (after the Civil War) the cattle swarmed, passed out of the valley along the timber line, on the natural highway of the prairie, by San Antonio, Austin, Fort Worth and on and on, taking meat to the giants of the North...." Georgetown lay directly on that path and many a cattle drive, originating in South Texas, passed through the area. The open ranch land west of town was ideal for raising livestock, and several cattlemen operated in and around Georgetown. Perhaps none were as successful as the

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three Snyder brothers. John Wesley and Dudley H. Snyder lived in Georgetown, while Thomas resided in nearby Liberty Hill. The cattle business enabled them to amass great fortunes in a very short time, and each built large and stylish homes as symbols of their newly acquired wealth and social status. These residences have since been destroyed or else severely altered, in the case with the D. H. Snyder House (Site No. 210) at 510 E. University. However, that of another cattleman, John Tinnin, remains as a link to this important era of Georgetown's past. This two-story house (Site No. 375, listed in the National Register) was built in 1879-80 for Clarence Dilley who died shortly after its completion. Tinnin bought the residence in 1880 and lived in it for many years. It remains an outstanding example of a frame dwelling with Victorian Italianate detailing. The local cattle boom was relatively short-lived, and by the mid-1880s, was no longer a major part of the town's economy.

During the mid-1870s, while townspeople were attempting to bring the railroad to Georgetown, Williamson County Commissioners resolved to replace the 1857 courthouse. Practicality was obviously a major factor in their decision, as the building was constantly in need of repair and offered little office or storage space. On a symbolic level, the commissioners also believed this simple vernacular structure did not accurately reflect the image they wished to project for Williamson County. A new edifice was needed which would symbolize not only the county's past stability and prosperity, but also its faith in the future. The new courthouse was completed in 1878, the same year the first railroad came to Georgetown. J.N. Preston and F.E. Ruffini designed the structure, both of whom were prominent late nineteenth-century Texas architects specializing in institutional buildings. Preston, who later started a firm with his son, designed the Driskill Hotel in Austin (listed in the 6th Street National Register Historic District) and the Bell County Courthouse (also listed in the National Register) in nearby Belton. F.E. Ruffini was architect of the Old Main Building (razed in the 1930s) at the University of Texas, as well as the courthouses in Blanco and Concho counties (both listed in the National Register).

A new county jail ( Site No. 421), designed by the Waco firm of Dodson and Dudley, was built in 1888. Unlike the previous jails, which had been erected on the courthouse square, it was built two blocks north of the courthouse. This stone structure still serves as the county jail, although a large addition was built in the late 1970s. Dodson and Dudley are well known for their courthouse designs in Parker (Weatherford), Hill (Hillsboro) and Hood (Granbury) counties. All of these structures are listed in the National Register.

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When the International and Great Northern Railroad built Williamson County's first major line through the southern part of the county in 1876, the people of Georgetown witnessed the sudden and profound impact of the railroad. New communities, such as Taylor, were created along the line, while other well-established towns, bypassed by the railroad, dwindled in size or were abandoned altogether. Many of Georgetown's leading citizens, fearing the consequences if the city were not linked with the railroad, established and financed the construction of the Georgetown Railroad. Terminating in Georgetown, this railway was to connect with the International and Great Northern Railroad in "new" Round Rock. The line was completed in December 1878, but its construction created such a financial burden on its owners that it was sold to the International and Great Northern Railroad a year later.

The arrival of the railroad enabled Georgetown to become a major cotton-producing center in Texas during the late nineteenth century. Efforts to grow the crop had begun as early as 1870, but high transportation costs hindered the early success of these cotton producers. Unlike those of the Brazos River valley, cotton growers in Williamson County and the Georgetown area did not have navigable rivers to easily and cheaply ship the crop easily and cheaply. This scenario changed in the late 1870s with arrival of the railroad, and cotton production became a profitable business as the rail linked Georgetown to new markets. The railroad also allowed more advanced farm implements to be shipped into Georgetown which helped increase productivity. By 1890 Williamson County was the largest cotton-producing county in the state.

As demand for the cash crop increased, cotton-related industries were established. The Georgetown Oil Mill (Site No. 293—not included in the nomination because of extensive alterations) was founded in 1891. The Georgetown Gin Co. and the recently demolished Hubbell Slack and Co. Cotton Gin (Site No. 237) operated during the early twentieth century. All were built along the tracks of the International and Great Northern Railroad on the west end of town.

Besides aiding in the development of the cotton industry, the railroad encouraged other manufacturing enterprises, such as the Georgetown Ice Plant, City Flour Mills, and First Texas Furniture, which began operations during the final quarter of the nineteenth century. Like the cotton gins, all were located in the west end of town near the tracks. They were generally small in scale and, with the exception of the ice plant, were only marginally profitable, operating for just a few years.

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As the town's overall economic prosperity increased, residents began to buy more goods. This, in turn, provided strong incentives for local merchants to expand, and for others to establish their businesses in Georgetown. Because the railroad allowed for cheap transportation of goods, these stores were able to offer better quality and a greater variety of merchandise than those of the pre-railroad era. As these merchants prospered, they erected new buildings, and the city's downtown (especially around the courthouse square) experienced a tremendous transformation during the 1880s and 1890s. Most of the extant buildings around the square date to this period, and demonstrate the importance of this era in the history and development of Georgetown. For a complete account of this development, see the National Register nomination for the Williamson County Courthouse Historic District (1977).

Georgetown's prosperity during the 1880s and 1890s spurred a construction boom that lasted through the first decade of the twentieth century. In addition to the many commercial buildings that were erected around the square, a large number of new residences were built. Many of the town's wealthiest citizens constructed large and impressive homes that reflected the stylistic preferences of the times. John Leavell, who operated a dry-goods store on the square, had built one of the city's most opulent residences (Site No. 663) by 1890. This Queen Anne structure is prominently sited at the corner of 8th and College streets. Other well-to-do merchants who erected new Queen Anne homes include Henry W. Harrell and J. A. McDougale, whose residences (Site Nos. 659 and 658) are listed in the University Avenue-Elm Street Historic District. A large number of citizens with more modest levels of income also constructed new dwellings. Although not as grand in scale or ornamentation of those built for the wealthy, these homes were finely crafted and have aged well over the years.

This demand for housing encouraged the establishment of local lumber yards, and the city boasted two planing mills as early as 1884. One of these, the Whittle and Harrell Lumber Co., stood at the southeast corner of Timber and Locust (later 9th) streets. J.W. Whittle and Moses Harrell were the two principals of the firm, and relatively little is known of their work. No extant residences can be documented as having been built by the company, which nevertheless probably built Harrell's own residence (Site No. 145) at 1001 Church Street. Several stone commercial buildings, including the Atkins-Nichols Building (Site No. 759) at 709 Main St., are known to have been erected by the firm. Harrell left the company in 1890 and T.E. Talbot took his place. The new partnership, known as the Whittle and Talbot Lumber Co., operated only three years. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps reveal that the old lumberyard was later converted into a cotton

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warehouse, but by 1925 the site was again used as a lumberyard when C.M. Nolen maintained his business at that location.

George and Tom Irvine operated the city's other early mill at the northeast corner of Forest and San Gabriel (later 7th) streets. These men, both Scottish immigrants, established the Irvine Brothers Lumber Co. in 1881. Although Tom died in 1883, George Irvine continued to run the business under his name until 1890, when the company was sold. The Hall (or Howlen) House (Site No. 749) at 1409 Olive Street, as well as Irvine's own residence (Site No. 177) at 409 E. University Avenue, are known to have been built by the firm. Clara Scarbrough writes that Irvine also constructed several bridges in the Georgetown area, none of which remain today.

Irvine sold his business in 1890 to Moses Harrell (formerly of Whittle and Harrell) and C.S. Belford. The partnership was relatively short-lived, operating only two years until Belford, along with other investors, purchased Harrell's interest in the firm. Known as the Belford Lumber Company, it operated for over three-quarters of a century and erected most of the homes in the town. The Belford Historic District (within this nomination), which includes Belford's own majestic residence (Site No. 376), presents a good selection of the many styles and types of houses built by the firm during Belford's lifetime. This company also erected the imposing two-story Masonic Lodge (Site No. 756) at the southeast corner of Main and 7th streets.

C.S. Griffith, another prominent lumberman, started his business in 1894. Both Griffith and Belford were long-time competitors in the construction business, although their rivalry helped to elevate the level of sophistication and craftsmanship of the homes built in Georgetown. Griffith's firm dealt primarily with frame residential structures, such as the Makemson House (Site No. 633) at 1002 Ash Street, although it did construct other building types. For example, the three-story stone Odd Fellows Hall, which once stood at the northeast corner of Main and 7th streets, demonstrates the company's ability to construct a finely crafted stone building. Like Belford's firm, the Griffith Lumber Co. operated for many years, and during that time built homes in a wide variety of styles, such as the Peaslee House (Site No. 616) at 1009 Elm Street, the Bainbridge-Chrietzberg House (Site No. 428) at 1216 Main Street (both of which are bungalows), and the Victorian-era Foster House (Site No. 325) at 912 Forest.

Georgetown was and remains a predominately Protestant community. During the town's early settlement period, religious services were held in



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private residences, but the influx of people in the 1860s and 1870s created the need for permanent church facilities. The First Presbyterian Church (Site No. 542), though much modified, is the oldest extant church in the city, and it has been an important landmark since its completion in 1872-73. Because few church buildings existed in Georgetown when it was constructed, the Presbyterian church was shared by other denominations until they could erect their own facilities. Southwestern University also used the building, and the classes for the school's first women students were held in the church's basement.

Grace Episcopal Church (Site No. 224), originally located at the southwest corner of Main and Orange (now 10th) streets, is another of Georgetown's early church buildings. Unlike the First Presbyterian Church, which was remodeled in 1910 and 1954, Grace Church looks much as it did when originally completed in 1881. This small frame structure was moved, however, in 1955 to its present location at 1314 E. University Avenue when expansion of the downtown area threatened its survival.

Prior to the establishment of the Methodist-supported Southwestern University in 1873, Georgetown had few Methodists, but the school's success, as well as its prominent role in the community, encouraged more members of that denomination to settle in Georgetown. In 1882 work began on a large church designed by architect J.N. Preston, on University Avenue, although funds were exhausted before completion and was left unfinished. An entirely new facility was begun in 1891 directly across the street from the uncompleted one. Believed to have been designed by Southwestern physics professor Robert S. Hyer, the First Methodist Church (Site No. 206) at 410 E. University was completed in 1893.

The Swedes who settled in the rural areas south for the most part, followers of the Methodist faith. Although other churches of the same denomination had been organized in the area, such as the First Methodist Church in Georgetown, the Swedes held their own services. Initially they met in private homes, but by 1883 they constructed a frame church near the intersection of Rabbit Hill and the Old Round Rock (now FM 1460) roads. By the early twentieth century, many of the church members had moved to Georgetown and, in a close vote, the congregation decided to build a new church in the city. In 1906 the cornerstone was laid for a new building (Site No. 174) designed by architect C.H. Page. When the new church was completed, the old one was razed and the cemetery is all that remains at the old site. Services in the 1906 church were held in Swedish up to the late 1930s or early 1940s.

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During the late nineteenth century, Southwestern University developed into one of the state's most highly regarded colleges. Initially, all of the institution's classrooms and offices were contained in a two-story stone building. However, as student enrollment increased, more facilities were needed. A third floor was added to the original school building in 1881 and a men's dormitory was built on campus in 1883. The university's expansion was hampered as housing encroached upon its grounds. When it first opened in 1872, the school stood at the eastern edge of town and was physically isolated from the rest of the community. One early account of the school during its formative years, as cited by Clara Scarbrough, (1083:242) described its location as "away out on the prairie." The city slowly expanded toward the college and by the 1880s the campus was surrounded by numerous residences. In many cases, these were the homes of professors who taught at the university. The frame dwelling (Site No. 632) at 904 Ash Street is one possible example, since county tax rolls indicate that it was owned by Dr. Robert S. Hyer, a physics professor at the college.

During the late 1880s, school trustees concluded that a new campus was necessary, and set aside land about four blocks east of the original grounds. The Ladies Annex, completed in 1889, was the first structure built on the new campus. A few years later, plans were made to construct a Main Building on the new grounds. In 1898, work began on this imposing Gothic Revival building designed by Layton and Raymond. The construction firm of Flume and Waterston, who helped build the State Capitol in Austin, as well as the First Methodist Church in Georgetown, served as contractors. The building was completed in 1900 and became a prominent physical landmark in the community. The old Main Building was then used as the university's fitting or preparatory school to help educate potential students who wished to enter the college. By 1923 this limestone structure was razed to make way for the Georgetown Public High School (Site No. 178). It, like several other early twentieth-century buildings in the city, was designed by C.H. Page of Austin.

As Georgetown entered the twentieth century, its economic and cultural future was promising. Southwestern was just completing its new Main Building. Demand for cotton, the area's primary cash crop, continued to increase, and commerce thrived on the courthouse square. Although Georgetown's population rose from 2,790 in 1900 to 3,096 in 1910, its rate of growth did not match that of the two previous decades. Taylor greatly outdistanced Georgetown as the major cotton center in the region, and other smaller towns in the eastern part of Williamson County built their own cotton gins. This decentralization of the cotton industry no doubt slowed the city's growth.

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Southwestern University continued to be the most stable force in the town. The completion of the Main Building not only allowed a larger number of students to enroll in the school, but the growing population also attracted better qualified professors to teach in its classrooms. Many of these professors built large homes, such as those of Amos Martin and W.C. Vaden (Site Nos. 743 and 180, respectively).

Southwestern University, in further expansion efforts, built a new men's dormitory (Site No. 186--listed in the National Register with the Main Building) in 1906. Designed by C.H. Page, this three-story structure was named for Dr. Francis Mood, first administrator of the school. Mood, perhaps more than any other individual, was responsible for the university's successful operation during its critical founding years.

Despite the construction of Mood Hall, as well as the Main Building, school trustees were pressured by some prominent state-wide church leaders to move the college to North Texas. The debate that followed divided members of the school as well as the church hierarchy in Texas. Citizens of Georgetown, outraged at the possibility of losing the school, successfully lobbied to keep it in the community. As a compromise, however, church officials established a new school, Southern Methodist University, in Dallas in 1912. Once this issue was resolved, Southwestern was permanently committed to maintaining its Georgetown location.

Several new buildings were constructed in the downtown area during the early years of the twentieth century. When completed, the Masonic Lodge (Site No. 456) and the I.O.O.F. Hall (razed in the 1960s) were two of the largest and most prominent structures in town. Structural problems in the 1878 courthouse became evident during this period, and in 1909 county voters passed a bond issue to build a new courthouse. C.H. Page Brothers of Austin served as architects, while W.C. Whitney of Beaumont was selected as contractors. On October 6, 1910, work began on the Neoclassical style edifice that was completed one year later. This courthouse (Site No. 417) still serves the county.

Townpeople eagerly watched the construction of the new courthouse while articles in the local newspaper monitored its progress. Its official opening in 1911 was an important local and county-wide event, and it has hailed by a reporter in the Williamson County Sun, "as one of the most beautiful courthouses in the state." It became a great source of pride among the citizens of Georgetown, who believed it would usher in a period of greater growth.

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The expected boom, however, never materialized. Instead, the era of rapid growth that had occurred during the previous 30 years, came to a halt. Between 1910 and 1920, Georgetown actually lost population, although by only a small amount. The local cotton industry, which had been a significant part of the town's economy, dwindled in size and importance as nearby Taylor consolidated its position as the area's foremost cotton center. At one time, Taylor was believed to be the country's largest inland cotton marketing center. Agriculture, retail sales, education, and county-government affairs remained the staples of Georgetown's small but diversified economy, but by themselves were not sufficient to spur rapid growth. They did provide a sound basis for steady expansion that characterized the city until the present commuter boom of the 1980s.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See General and Specific References lists

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property See individual site forms

Quadrangle name Georgetown, Texas and Round Rock, Texas

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References See individual site forms, and continuation sheets

A 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See individual site forms

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

| state | N/A | code | county | code |
|-------|-----|------|--------|------|
|-------|-----|------|--------|------|

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|-------|------|--------|------|

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title David Moore and Daniel Hardy (with Kenneth Breisch, THC)

(Georgetown Heritage Society)

organization HARDY HECK MOORE (HHM)

date July 1984

street & number P.O. Box 13392

telephone 512/459-4464

city or town Austin

state Texas 78711

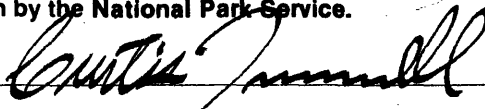
## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 19 Nov. 1985

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

See Continuation sheet for listing  
Keeper of the National Register

date

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
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Page 1

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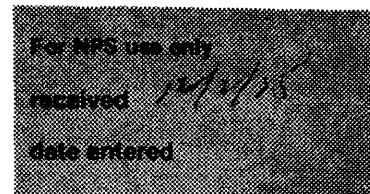
Williamson County Historical Scrapbooks. Compiled by the Williamson County  
Historical Commission. On file, Georgetown Municipal Library,  
Georgetown, Texas.

Williamson County Sun. Microfilm collection, offices of the Williamson  
County Sun, Georgetown, Texas.



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Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Georgetown Multiple Resource Area  
State Williamson County, TEXAS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- |                              |                                     |            |                                 |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Amos, Martin C., House    | Entered in the<br>National Register | for Keeper | <u>Alonzo Byers</u> 4/29/86     |
|                              |                                     | Attest     |                                 |
| 2. Arnold-Torbet House       | Entered in the<br>National Register | for Keeper | <u>Alonzo Byers</u> 4/29/86     |
|                              |                                     | Attest     |                                 |
| 3. Belford Historic District | Substantive Review                  | Keeper     | <u>Linda McClelland</u> 4/29/86 |
|                              |                                     | Attest     |                                 |
| 4. Atkinson House            | Entered in the<br>National Register | for Keeper | <u>Alonzo Byers</u> 4/29/86     |
|                              |                                     | Attest     |                                 |
| 5. Bowlen House              | Entered in the<br>National Register | for Keeper | <u>Alonzo Byers</u> 1/14/86     |
|                              |                                     | Attest     |                                 |
| 6. Burcham House             | Entered in the<br>National Register | for Keeper | <u>Alonzo Byers</u> 4/29/86     |
|                              |                                     | Attest     |                                 |
| 7. Casey House               | Entered in the<br>National Register | for Keeper | <u>Alonzo Byers</u> 4/14/86     |
|                              |                                     | Attest     |                                 |
| 8. Chesser-Morgan House      | Substantive Review                  | Keeper     | <u>Linda McClelland</u> 1/14/86 |
|                              |                                     | Attest     |                                 |
| 9. Caswell House             | Entered in the<br>National Register | for Keeper | <u>Alonzo Byers</u> 4/29/86     |
|                              |                                     | Attest     |                                 |
| 10. Coffee, J. T., House     |                                     | Keeper     | <u>[Signature]</u> S            |
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National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
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date entered

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State Williamson County, TEXAS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

11. Easley, S. A., House

Keeper

Melvyn Byers 4/29/86

Attest

12. Daughtrey, E. M., House

Keeper

Melvyn Byers 4/29/86

Attest

13. First Methodist Church

Substantive Review

Keeper

Linda McClelland 6/17/86

Attest

14. Fowler, D.D., House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Linda McClelland 4/29/86

Attest

15. Grace Episcopal Church

Substantive Review

Keeper

Linda McClelland 4/29/86

Attest

16. Harris, E.M., House

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper

Melvyn Byers 1/14/86

Attest

17. Harrell, Moses, House

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper

Melvyn Byers 1/14/86

Attest

- 2 - 18. House at 214 W. University

Substantive Review

Keeper

Linda McClelland 4/29/86

Attest

19. House at 907 Pine

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper

Melvyn Byers 1/14/86

Attest

20. House at 801 West

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper

Melvyn Byers 1/14/86

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21. Hawnen, A. W., House

for Keeper

Delores Byers 4/29/86

Attest

22. Harper-Chesser House

for Keeper

Delores Byers 4/29/86

Attest

23. Hyer, Dr. Robert, House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Linda McClelland 1/14/86

Attest

24. Imhoff House

for Keeper

Delores Byers 4/14/86

Attest

25. Irvine, George, House

for Keeper

Delores Byers 4/29/86

Attest

26. Johnson, J.J., Farm

Substantive Review

Keeper

Linda McClelland 1/14/86

Attest

27. Lane-Riley House

for Keeper

Delores Byers 4/29/86

Attest

28. Leake, Will & Mary, House

Keeper

Linda McClelland 4/29/86

Attest

29. Love, Frank & Mellie,  
House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Linda McClelland 4/29/86

Attest

30. Leavell, John, House

Keeper

Linda McClelland 4/29/86

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Thematic Group

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State Williamson County, TEXAS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

31. Lockett, M.B. and Annie,  
House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

*Linda McClellan 4/29/86*

32. Makemson, W.K. and Kate,  
House

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper

Attest

*Delores Byers 4/14/86*

33. M.K.T. Bridge

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

*Act 5*

34. McKnight-Ebb House

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper

Attest

*Delores Byers 4/14/86*

35. McMurray House

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper

Attest

*Delores Byers 4/14/86*

36. Miller--Ellyson House

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper

Attest

*Delores Byers 4/14/86*

37. Paige-DeCrow-Weir House

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper

Attest

*Delores Byers 4/14/86*

38. Old Georgetown High  
School

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

*Linda McClellan 4/14/86*

39. Pegues House

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper

Attest

*Delores Byers 4/14/86*

40. Price, R.H. & Martha,  
House

Entered in the  
National Register

Keeper

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*Delores Byers 4/29/86*

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Thematic Group

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Date/Signature

41. Patrick, Woodson & Margaret,  
House

Entered in the for  
National Register Keeper

Delores Byers 1/14/86

Attest

42. Reedy, J.H., House

Entered in the for  
National Register Keeper

Delores Byers 4/29/86

Attest

43. Rouser House

Substantive Review Keeper

Linda McClelland 1/14/86

Attest

44. Saint John's Methodist  
Church

Entered in the for  
National Register Keeper

Delores Byers 4/29/86

Attest

45. Saxon Motor Car Store

Substantive Review Keeper

Linda McClelland 2/17/86

Attest

46. Sansom-Schmalenbeck House

Entered in the for  
National Register Keeper

Delores Byers 1/14/86

Attest

47. Stone, Robert and Lula,  
House

Entered in the for  
National Register Keeper

Delores Byers 1/14/86

Attest

48. Sillure, A.W., House

Substantive Review Keeper

Linda McClelland 4/29/86

Attest

49. Taylor-Cooper House

Entered in the for  
National Register Keeper

Delores Byers 1/14/86

Attest

50. Vaden, W.C. and Kate,  
House

Entered in the for  
National Register Keeper

Delores Byers 4/29/86

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Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

51. Wesley Chapel AME Church

~~Entered in the~~ *for*  
~~National Register~~ Keeper

*Delores Byers 4/4/86*

Attest

52. Wilcox, D.K. & Inez, House

~~Entered in the~~ *for*  
~~National Register~~ Keeper

*Delores Byers 4/29/86*

Attest

53. Wilcox-Graves House

~~Substantive Review~~ Keeper

*Linda McCallum 4/29/86*

Attest

54. Williamson County Courthouse  
Historic District  
(Boundary Increase)

~~Substantive Review~~ Keeper

*Linda McCallum 4/29/86*

Attest

Keeper

Attest

Keeper

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