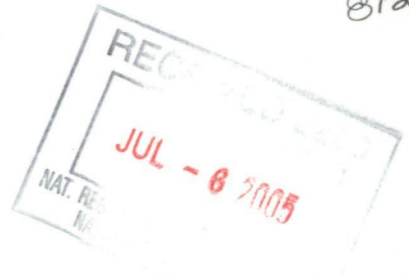


892



(Oct. 1990)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

HISTORIC NAME: Crim, Elias and Mattie, House

OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER:

2. LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 310 East Main Street

CITY OR TOWN: Henderson

STATE: Texas

CODE: TX

COUNTY: Rusk

CODE: 401

NOT FOR PUBLICATION: N/A

VICINITY: N/A

ZIP CODE: 75652

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 (nationally) (statewide) (locally). (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Handwritten Signature]

Signature of certifying official

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register

See continuation sheet

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain):

[Handwritten Signature]
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

8-17-05

5. CLASSIFICATION

OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY: Private

CATEGORY OF PROPERTY: Building

NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY:	CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING
	2	0 BUILDINGS
	0	0 SITES
	0	0 STRUCTURES
	0	0 OBJECTS
	2	0 TOTAL

NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER: 0

NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING: N/A

6. FUNCTION OR USE

HISTORIC FUNCTIONS: DOMESTIC/single dwelling, secondary structure

CURRENT FUNCTIONS: DOMESTIC/single dwelling, secondary structure

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals/Neo-Classical Revival

MATERIALS: FOUNDATION BRICK
WALLS BRICK, WOOD
ROOF ASPHALT
OTHER GLASS

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-7).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 5

Crim House
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

The 1913 Elias and Mattie Crim House, at 310 East Main Street, is sited on a lot just over one acre in Henderson, the seat of Rusk County, Texas. The house is three blocks east of the county courthouse and the historic commercial district of Henderson, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Facing north, the house is elevated above the street and sidewalk, creating a prominent landmark in a neighborhood of mostly historic residences. Several large trees along the sidewalk and property lines provide shade for the property. The two-story modified square plan house has symmetrically balanced windows and center door, a full-height entry porch with lower wrap porch, composite columns, balustrades, and brick and wood exterior finishes. The interior features high ceilings, a center hall and staircase, large rooms, balcony and porch spaces, and an additional large hall running laterally across the second floor. A circa 1935 outbuilding, originally built as a large bird house, compliments the house in materials and is considered a contributing resource in this nomination. With only minor changes since its original construction, the Crim House retains a high degree of integrity.

Setting

Henderson, the county seat of Rusk County, is in northeast Texas, some 140 miles east-southeast of Dallas. The city is at the intersection of U.S. Highways 79 and 259, as well as several state roads. The terrain is hilly, with small creeks and drainages that generally run southwest toward the Angelina River or northeast toward the Sabine River. The streets, blocks, and lots follow a grid pattern, but a large open space at the intersection of North-South Main Street and East-West Main Street distinguishes the commercial downtown from most others in Texas. The original courthouse square occupied this intersection, and Henderson's business district developed with the square as its focal point. Such a trend typified most of the state's other county seats. After the county abandoned and razed the building in 1928 following construction of a new courthouse one block north, the original courthouse square was left open, giving downtown Henderson a most uncommon and distinctive physical feature. Despite the relocation of the courthouse, most of the late 19th and early 20th century commercial buildings that encircled the former courthouse site survive and retain much of their integrity.¹

There are currently no residential properties in Henderson individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The Henderson Commercial Historic District, including parts of sixteen blocks near the county courthouse, was listed in the NRHP in 1995. There are more than a dozen state historical markers in Henderson, and five buildings designated as Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks: the Crim House (built 1913, RTHL 2003), Hardeman-Griffin House (313 E. Main, built 1884, RTHL 1985), Howard-Dickinson House (S. Main, built 1855, RTHL 1968), Mattie Trammell Schoolhouse (600 N. High, built 1892, RTHL 1992), T. J. Walling Log Cabin (514 N. High, built 1841, RTHL 1983). One of the more unusual local landmarks is the Arnold Outhouse, a 1908 privy still standing at the site of a prominent house that was razed in 1966.

The Crim House on East Main was not the first to be built on the block. The Cover home sat just to the west of 310 East Main, with red brick supplied by Henderson Clay Products, but it burned in the 1950s. The Kate Brown home is still standing at 305 East Main and is currently owned by Pat and Tom Laney. Next to the Kate

¹ "Henderson Commercial Historic District;" "Henderson, Texas."

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 6

Crim House
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

Brown home were two homes owned by the Griffin brothers at 311 and 313 East Main. The Hardeman-Griffin House at 313 East Main is owned today by Georgia and Kirby Darnell and is a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark. A concrete sidewalk and concrete steps lead from street level to the sidewalk and then from the sidewalk to the Crim House.

Exterior

The Crim House is a two-story brick dwelling with a mostly symmetrical primary façade and Neoclassical architectural elements. The house is on the south side of Main Street and faces north. A circa 1920 photograph (see page FIGURE-19) shows that the east elevation was initially two open porches with a flat roof supported by columns, but this space was enclosed circa 1935 to create additional living space. The north or primary elevation has a projecting entry supported by four composite columns. The columns most closely resemble the Ionic order, but with volutes that radiate 45 degrees from the primary plane, they are more exactly termed Scamozzi order. Vincenzo Scamozzi (1548-1616) was an Italian Renaissance architect and follower of Andrea Palladio who wrote treatises on architecture further defining the types of composite orders.²

The center door on the north elevation is a four-panel door with three panes along the top. Sidelights on either side feature 6/1 panes of glass. On either side of the door are two 12/1 windows with screens and wooden shutters. The siding is clapboard, with a beadboard soffit that slopes gently from the house toward the front of the wooden porch. The hanging light fixtures also appear to be historic. Atop the projecting entry, an attic dormer provides access to a balcony on top of the roof, which has a wooden balustrade. On the second floor, a small square 3/1 window with shutters aligns with the entry door. Two doors that lead from a pair of bedrooms are on either side of the window and provide access to the second floor balcony. Each bedroom has a 12/1 window with wood shutters on the outside of the doors. A wooden balustrade borders the second-story porch. A widow's walk and wooden balustrade sit atop the hipped roof. Additional doors on the northeast corner provide access to the porch.

The east elevation has a flat roof supported by two more two-story Scamozzi columns, and on both floors the originally open porch space was enclosed in the 1930s to create additional living space. On both floors, the rooms have large banks of windows on the north, east and south sides. The top of the flat roof has a wooden balustrade which appears in the earliest photographs of the house. A brick chimney projects above the east elevation roof. The west elevation continues the wrapped porch on the first floor, and in the southwest corner the square plan is modified with a room extension on both floors. This floor plan feature appears on the earliest Sanborn insurance maps for the house in 1919. The south side also has a projecting room on both floors, and a second-story balcony with wooden balustrade. The rear of the house includes a pool and brick patio, wooden trellis and other minor features. To the south of the house, a small wooden outbuilding was constructed circa 1935 as a bird house for Mattie Crim's canaries and other birds. This building, measuring ten feet square, is built of similar materials as the main house and also corresponds with changes made to the house in the mid-

² Harris 481; Correspondence, Linda Henderson to T. J. Griffith, September 4, 2003, in "Elias Fleming and Mattie Spharler Crim House."

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 7

Crim House
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

1930s that included enclosing the east elevation to create a bathroom and additional small room. Before that time the house did not have indoor plumbing. A privy that previously stood south of the house is no longer present. The canary house is considered a contributing resource in this nomination.

Interior

The interior also features historic finishes and room layouts. Hardwood floors and high ceilings are present in most areas. Entering the house through the main (north) door, one enters a central hall with a staircase at the back of the house. To the left (east), a 24 x 30 foot living room and 15 x 17 foot bedroom occupy the primary space. An 8 x 15 foot office is at the rear of the house beyond the bedroom, and a 6 x 8 foot bathroom and 8 x 20 foot sitting room are on the east side in the area enclosed in the 1930s. On the right (west) of the central hall, a 15 x 15 foot sitting parlor is at the front of the house, with a 15 x 21 foot dining room and 16 x 16 breakfast room toward the back. A 16 x 28 foot kitchen and den take up the west side of the house. A double fireplace provided heat for the bedroom and living room on the east side.

On the second floor, two 16 x 17 foot bedrooms are at the front of the house, with a 4 x 16 foot double closet between them. On the east side are a 6 x 8 foot bathroom and 8 x 20 foot master sitting room. A 9 x 32 foot grand hall runs east-west along the second floor, providing access to a 14 x 15 foot bedroom and 9 x 16 foot sleeping porch on the south side, along with 8 x 17 and 5 x 7 foot bathroom spaces on the west side. A 16 x 15 foot master bedroom is in the southeast corner, along with a closet, small hall and fireplace.

Changes since 1913

The porch infill on the east side was done in 1935 or 1936, during the local oil boom, when Mattie Spharler Crim was given a share of her father's proceeds from selling many of his lots. She added the bathroom and small seating area that are on the east side of the porch.³ The house has had relatively minor alterations since its construction, and still retains a great deal of historic material and finishes. The Texas Historical Commission designated the Crim House a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark in 2003.

Table of resources within property boundary:

Crim House	1913/1935	BUILDING	contributing
canary house	c. 1935	BUILDING	contributing

³ Crim, E. F., Jr. interview.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

- A** PROPERTY IS ASSOCIATED WITH EVENTS THAT HAVE MADE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE BROAD PATTERNS OF OUR HISTORY.
- B** PROPERTY IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE LIVES OF PERSONS SIGNIFICANT IN OUR PAST.
- C** PROPERTY EMBODIES THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF A TYPE, PERIOD, OR METHOD OF CONSTRUCTION OR REPRESENTS THE WORK OF A MASTER, OR POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUE, OR REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT AND DISTINGUISHABLE ENTITY WHOSE COMPONENTS LACK INDIVIDUAL DISTINCTION.
- D** PROPERTY HAS YIELDED, OR IS LIKELY TO YIELD, INFORMATION IMPORTANT IN PREHISTORY OR HISTORY.

CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS: N/A

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: ARCHITECTURE

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: 1913, 1935

SIGNIFICANT DATES: 1913, 1935

SIGNIFICANT PERSON: N/A

CULTURAL AFFILIATION: N/A

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: J. T. Melton, carpenter, Henderson, Texas.

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (see continuation sheets 8-8 through 8-16).

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

BIBLIOGRAPHY (see continuation sheet 9-17).

PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS): N/A

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection 8 Page 8Crim House
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

The 1913 Elias and Mattie Crim House is a well-executed and intact example of a Neoclassical dwelling in east Texas. Built by local carpenter J. T. Melton, the two-story brick and wood house retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association to a high degree. The Crim and Spharle families accumulated wealth in oil, gas, retail business, undertaking, and real estate in the Henderson area. E. F. Crim was also with the First National Bank for forty years, rising from cashier to president. He also served on the city council and school board, and Mattie was likewise active in community affairs. The house remained in the Crim family until 1987. Prominently sited on a large lot in Henderson, it is a local landmark. The property is nominated for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the local level of significance. It is a good local example of a Neoclassical residence, and it retains historic and architectural integrity to a high degree.

Community history

Captain W. A. Miller became the first Anglo-American settler in the area with the establishment of a farm near present-day Henderson in 1838. Organized settlement remained sparse until the defeat of Cherokee Indians in the Battle of the Neches the following year. By 1843, sufficient numbers of settlers moved to the region and the Republic of Texas created Rusk County from Nacogdoches County. The Texas Congress stipulated that the new county be named in honor of Thomas Jefferson Rusk (1803-1857), and the county seat named for James Pinckney Henderson (1808-1858), both celebrated figure in Texas' struggle for independence. Rusk County originally encompassed a much larger area than it does today and included parts of present day Shelby, Panola, and Gregg counties. Even though Rusk County's size has changed since its formal organization in 1843, the county's seat of government has been Henderson since the town's establishment in 1844. The original town plat initially encompassed a small parcel of land that included the residence of General James Smith. Surveyors soon laid out the town, and the first lots were sold on May 3, 1844.⁴

Early entrepreneurs catered to the dispersed rural community, whose members relied principally upon cultivation of their own edible goods. As farmers tapped the county's rich agricultural potential, increased production translated into greater trade and commerce. Agricultural Schedules of the U.S. Census for 1850 and 1860 reveal Rusk County as one of Texas' leading suppliers of cotton and corn. These crops were the staples of both the local and state agricultural based economies. Typical of most who settled in this part of Texas, early Rusk County settlers hailed from Lowland South states, such as Alabama and Mississippi. These pioneers established an agricultural system that relied heavily upon slave labor. In 1850, when the first federal census was taken in Texas, Rusk County's population included 6,012 whites and 2,136 slaves, and cotton totals were 2,659 bales. A substantial rise in cotton production in subsequent years coincided with an increased slave population. Census records of 1860 note that the county's slave population swelled to 6,132, up almost 300 percent from 1850, and the number of cotton bales produced that year reached 11,791, almost fivefold more than a decade earlier.⁵

⁴ "Henderson Commercial Historic District;" "Henderson, Texas."

⁵ "Henderson Commercial Historic District."

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Continuation SheetSection 8 Page 9Crim House
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

Efforts to extend railroad service through Henderson during the initial phase of rail construction in Texas in the 1850s illustrate the city's ascendance into a regional commercial center. The Eastern Texas Railroad, which originated as the Henderson and Burkeville Railroad Company, was among the earliest railroads chartered in Texas. Organizers of the Galveston, Houston and Henderson Railroad also proposed to make Henderson its northern terminus. The line was to extend through the fertile and productive timber and farm lands of East Texas and terminate at Galveston, the state's primary seaport. Both railroads completed only a few miles of track before the onset of the Civil War curtailed further construction efforts. But while the 1850s represented a period of growth and prosperity for Henderson and its downtown, the 1860s and early 1870s marked an era of stagnation and modest decline. On August 5, 1860, a fire destroyed much of the downtown, including 14 stores, at least eight law offices, two grocery stores, and many other buildings. Property owners undertook little new construction from 1861 to 1865, when citizens turned their attention and resources toward the war.⁶

By 1870 Rusk County's population and agricultural production declined to such an extent that Henderson's attractiveness as a possible center for rail trade and transportation all but vanished. The first railroad to extend through Rusk County was the International and Great Northern Railroad in 1872. Completely bypassing Henderson, the railroad skirted the northwest corner of the county. Settlers in this part of the county, most notably Frank Overton, worked to establish a new city that temporarily surpassed Henderson as the primary shipping point for Rusk County. The citizens of Henderson, hoping to tap into the potential lucrative railroad network, responded by organizing the Henderson and Overton Branch Railroad on April 29, 1874. Service began in 1877, marking the official beginning of the railroad era in Henderson. In 1880 the International and Great Northern Railroad purchased the operation and incorporated it into the company's vast network. The advent of rail service proved to be a pivotal factor for Henderson and its downtown during the late 19th century. The railroad greatly reduced transportation costs, and area farmers shipped their cash and surplus crops at reduced costs. As farmers realized greater earnings, their purchasing power increased. Trade escalated, ushering in an era of growth and expansion in the downtown that lasted through the 1880s.⁷

Corn continued to be grown in significant quantity, but the most profitable crop of the era was cotton. In 1870 Rusk County, with 12,752 bales, ranked fourth in the state in cotton production. Local cotton production remained at the same levels, but by 1880 and 1890 Rusk County's statewide ranking fell to 24th and 46th, respectively. Greater quantities of the state's cotton came from the Blackland Prairie belt in central Texas by the late 19th century. The proliferation of other cotton related enterprises, such as gins, helped local businessmen realize profits from cotton, thereby stimulating the economy and contributing to downtown development. Farmers brought ginned bales to Henderson, loaded them onto railroad cars, and shipped them to cotton compresses and textile mills elsewhere in East Texas for processing. Cotton remained the foundation of the agriculture-based economy, but local farmers also grew other crops. Truck farming became more popular during the late 19th century, as evidenced by the opening of the East Canning Company plant in 1890 near Henderson's depot, about three miles northeast of downtown.

⁶ "Henderson Commercial Historic District;" "Henderson, Texas."

⁷ "Henderson Commercial Historic District."

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Continuation SheetSection 8 Page 10Crim House
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

Another important source of revenue for local residents of the late 19th century centered upon the exploitation of natural resources, specifically clay. Residents had known since the 1830s and 1840s that abundant supplies of clay were under the fertile topsoil certain parts of Rusk County, and they also knew its value as a source for making bricks and pottery. However, large-scale efforts to capitalize on this readily available natural resource were not attempted until the arrival of the railroad. Between 1885 and 1890, a plant for the Henderson Pottery Company was erected near the Henderson and Overton Branch Railroad depot. The firm helped diversify the local economy and the prosperity it brought to Henderson contributed to downtown development. Only a handful of businesses catered directly to the cotton, truck farming, and pottery industries, but the late 19th century boom stimulated overall trade and retail activity in Henderson. In 1885, thirteen grocery stores and thirteen general stores were present downtown. The next most common businesses included entertainment facilities like saloons, billiard rooms, and liquor stores, with five such establishments. The downtown also included four drug stores, three hardware or building supply stores, three dry goods and clothing stores, one bank, one furniture store, one saddle shop, and one sewing machine dealer.⁸

Henderson experienced renewed growth and expansion in the early twentieth century, which led to a resurgence in commercial, retail, and building activity in downtown. Exploitation of timber in rural Rusk County and the advent of large-scale lumber operations in Henderson also contributed to Henderson's early 20th century boom. The 1909 construction of a new railroad, the Timpson and Henderson, spurred growth, thereby stimulating commerce and trade downtown. The Timpson and Henderson Railroad, which extended through some of the state's richest timber, transported lumber to other markets accessible by rail. Although sawmills had been in operation in Rusk County since the mid 19th century, they were small ventures, catering only to local needs and demands. Rapid growth across the state during the early 20th century spawned a massive construction boom, and the lumber supply business became increasingly lucrative. The development of Henderson's lumber industry was a response to this trend and downtown enjoyed benefits from its brisk growth. Profits from the sale of lumber pumped revenues into the community spurring increased commerce and trade. With flourishing lumber and cotton trades, local consumer spending increased, as did the availability of capital for investment purposes. Downtown expansion continued but not as intensely as it had during the late 1870s and 1880s. Another important development of the period was the establishment of the First National Bank of Henderson. On March 17, 1902, a group of prominent local businessmen established the financial institution and acquired a lot at the southeast corner of E. Main and S. Marshall streets. The bank subsequently erected a 2-story brick building that became a downtown landmark. As the courthouse had done many years earlier, the bank became a node of activity and made nearby property more valuable. Much of downtown's early 20th century expansion consequently shifted east, extending along Marshall Street. Seven extant buildings in the district, most notably the Liberty Hotel, front onto this thoroughfare and date from this period.⁹

Although the central business district expanded to the east and south, the 1878 courthouse prevailed as the focus of the downtown. The most desirable commercial property remained the 100 block of East Main Street. During

⁸ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Henderson, Texas, June 1885.

⁹ "Henderson Commercial Historic District."

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Continuation SheetSection 8 Page 11Crim House
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

this boom period, some merchants in this area either remodeled their existing facilities or erected completely new buildings on the sites of older stores. The United States entry into World War I apparently impeded downtown expansion and development. By 1920 when the first official census of the city was taken, Henderson's population was tallied at 2,273, although Sanborn maps had estimated the population to be 3,000 a year earlier. It is likely that population figures the Sanborn Map Company provided were equally optimistic. Downtown remained the principal center for commercial and retail activity for Rusk County and its largely agriculture based economy. The years following World War I were hard ones for Texas farmers, and the state's depressed economy affected Henderson. Sanborn maps confirm that downtown property owners erected no new buildings between 1912 and 1927. The paving of streets around the square in 1925 represented the most substantial construction activity of the era and dramatically transformed the area's physical character.

The need to improve roads in the years following World War I reflected the widespread use and popularity of automobiles, and Henderson's brick street paving program resembled similar efforts in cities throughout Texas and the rest of the nation. The undertaking of such a project followed the official incorporation of Henderson and the establishment of a municipal government in 1911. Two years later, the City initiated the paving of some streets with asphalt, which no doubt pleased local car owners. A larger and more significant street paving program began in 1924 after voters approved a \$75,000 bond package to finance the brick paving of selected city streets. Because of its central location and its high use, the central business district was targeted for most of the work. The City hired Smith Brothers, a contracting firm apparently from Abilene, Texas, to undertake the work in 1925. County records note that property owners with frontage onto a street being paved bore some of the construction costs. The brick street paving program continued incrementally throughout the city for ten years, but little physical evidence of it survives today.¹⁰

Crim and Spharler family history

Abraham Crim, son of John and Rachel Crim, grew up in South Carolina and was the first of the family to come to Texas. Abraham married Joanna Armstrong, and they lived for a time in Shelby County, Alabama. They came to Rusk County with their large family sometime after 1847. Abraham and Joanna had twelve children: Zachariah, Louisa, William, Missouri, America, Peter, Elias, Eliza, Matilda, Wylie, James K. Polk, and John Wesley. Two sons, William and Elias, were killed in the Civil War, and the husbands of America, Louisa, and Missouri died either directly or indirectly due to the war. So America, Louisa, and Missouri came to Texas with their children and lived with their father's family. One of these children of Abraham and Joanna, John Wesley Crim, married Loutie Gibson, who had come to Rusk County with her family from Tallahassee, Florida. The children of John Wesley and Loutie were William Claude, Elias Fleming (named for his uncle Elias who was killed in the Civil War), Arrington, Benard Yancey, Sterling Manly, Churchill Wilbur, Gibson Wilson, Earl and Louise. Abraham and his very large family, as well as most of their children in the above list, are buried at Crim's Chapel. This family donated the land for the church and cemetery. The farm land is still owned by direct heirs. The deed states that Elias paid for some acreage with fold, then later sold it to his father Abraham.¹¹

¹⁰ "Henderson Commercial Historic District."

¹¹ *Rusk County History* 166.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Crim House
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

Elias Fleming Crim, Sr. (November 10, 1878 - March 26, 1946) was born on the family farm at Crim's Chapel, eight miles north of Henderson. He came to Henderson when he was eighteen years old, riding in a wagon on a bale of cotton. He attended business school at Omen Business School in Smith County and went to work for the First National Bank in Henderson, where for forty years he was executive vice-president.

Mattie Mae Spharler (February 7, 1882 - August 15, 1947) was the daughter of F. H. Spharler and Kate Burt Spharler. F. H. (September 9, 1847 - October 1935) was born in Gaston, South Carolina. When he returned from service in the Civil War, he walked from South Carolina to Millville in northern Rusk County. He settled out on a farm at Millville with his wife and owned a lot of land around Millville. He would soon become postmaster. As each U.S. President came into office, F. H. Spharler was reappointed as the Millville postmaster. Kate Burt Spharler (1856 - 1925) raised five children: Mattie Mae, Fredericka, Edward, Gus and Syd.¹²

The Spharler family later moved into Henderson, and F. H. became involved with real estate. He managed to buy and develop much of the property on Elk Street and the road going out by the Northside School. This was big open land during this period, but the developments soon began establishing this part of early Henderson. One of F. H.'s favorite pastimes was his race horse named Rainbow. F. H.'s son Gus soon adopted his father's pastime, and loved to ride and race horses. He had a 400-acre tract on Chicken Feather Road (Millville Road), where he and E. F. Crim, Sr. rode horses together. E. F. also rode Rainbow, and kept him until he died. Gus trained horses for years on this farm, and took them to Arlington Downs, New Orleans and Hot Springs race tracks. The friendship between Gus and E. F., Sr. undoubtedly led to the association that united E. F. and Mattie Spharler.

Arrington Crim, brother of E. F. Sr., was another son of one of Crim's Chapel's best-known pioneer couples, the late Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Crim. Arrington first entered business in Henderson in 1908, selling wagons, buggies, harnesses and general farm equipment. For a number of years he was associated with the late L. T. Burton, in the hardware and furniture business, and on November 25, 1910, he was married to Miss Fred Spharler, member of another pioneer Rusk County family. In 1925, their first funeral home was opened at 115 North Marshall Street.¹³ The first A. Crim funeral home was behind Ray's Pharmacy. During the next few years, the A. Crim Funeral Home built a favorable reputation that was becoming known far and wide. In fact, the business grew to such an extent that the Crims decided to devote their entire time to it, building the new structure on South Marshall Street in 1934, where they also made their home in the beautiful living quarters on the second floor. Mrs. Crim, or "Miss Fred" as she was known to thousands, passed away November 28, 1935, and Mr. Crim carried on the business with only his staff until June 22, 1937, when he married the widow Mrs. John C. Gray, who was the former Miss Agnes King.¹⁴ A new organ, larger garages, more modern motor equipment and a public address system were a few of the improvements added to the A. Crim Funeral Home,

¹² *Rusk County History* 392.

¹³ Farmer 117.

¹⁴ Farmer 117.

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Crim House
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

and it not only served the normal requirements of this section, but did a most outstanding service in handling victims of the New London School explosion in 1937.¹⁵

In 1913 E. F. and Mattie Crim hired J. T. Melton to build them a new home at 310 East Main.¹⁶ The house cost \$7,500. Melton built several homes in Henderson and retired to a workshop provided him by the Tatum school district. By 1913, Elias and Mattie Crim had two children, Otis (April 23, 1905 – October 25, 1960) and Lucile (January 21, 1911 – March 13, 1995). Otis and his wife Gladys (June 17, 1922 – August 20, 1975) did not have children. Otis operated Otis Crim Funeral Home until his death. Frances Lucile Crim was the only daughter born to E. F. and Mattie Crim. On November 14, 1932, she married Dr. Clifford Engle, born September 7, 1893 in Toledo, Ohio. They had one son, Dr. Ronald Crim Engle, who died August 29, 1977. Lucile and Dr. Engle lived at 320 East Main, two doors down from E. F. and Katherine, in the house built in 1924 by her uncle and aunt, Arrington and Fredricka Spharler Crim. One day Arrington asked Lucile how much money she had in her purse and she found a few coins. Arrington and Fredricka deeded their niece 320 East Main for the loose change. The Crim children continued the tradition of community service, with professions such as undertaker, legislator, and postmaster.¹⁷

The Crim House, which remained in the Crim family until 1987, is a good example of Neoclassical design. It features a widow's walk and large porches with scamozzi columns.¹⁸ Much pride and attention to quality and detail was given in the construction. The entire home is built out of pure East Texas pine, and even in the attic, there is not a knot to be found in the pine timber there. The whole house was built from pine supplied out of the East Texas Lumber Yards, formerly the old Rusk County Lumber Yard. The magnificent columns on the front façade were ordered from Georgia. All the oak hardwood floors were supplied from local timber and placed over pine floors, to form a double floor. There was originally no indoor plumbing, but there was a two-seater outhouse in the back. Under the kitchen sink, there was an old well, with wonderful drinking water, but it was sealed over and the family used piped in city water. The kitchen had a fireplace and chimney, where many wonderful family meals were prepared. The first telephone number was only three digits, number 246.

Mattie Spharler Crim enjoyed settling into her new home. In addition to her homemaking and parenting duties, she began raising canaries, and became an authority on the subject. She had friends in Carthage and Nacogdoches who also raised canaries and they communicated often on the pleasures of breeding the beautiful little songbirds. Mattie loved her little friends, always having twenty or more, and she had a special little cottage, still standing, built behind the big house. Today one can still hear songbirds singing in the backyard. Mattie also cared for cardinals and other birds besides canaries. E. F. Sr. often enjoyed sleeping in an old iron bed on the back sleeping porch. He spent many spring and summer evenings enjoying their beautiful home and grounds.

¹⁵ Farmer 118.

¹⁶ Lee, Patsy and June Stokeley interview.

¹⁷ "Elias Fleming and Mattie Spharler Crim House."

¹⁸ "Elias Fleming and Mattie Spharler Crim House."

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Crim House
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

E. F. and Mattie had one more addition to their family. Dr. W. P. White delivered Elias Fleming, Jr. on November 11, 1919, in one of the upstairs bedrooms overlooking East Main. He arrived only one day after his father's birthday, November 10, and after the family had been living in their new home six years. As E. F. Jr. got older, he set up a very large electric train in the former music room where the piano had been. He played with it for years, and so did his family. Now that their family of three children was complete, Mattie Spharler Crim became an active mother and community member.

It was after the oil boom in the 1930s that F. H. Spharler sold many of his lots of which his children, Mattie, Fredericka and Gus owned interests. With Mattie's share of the funds, she and E. F. were able to re-decorate their home, and add indoor plumbing. It just so happened that his brother Arrington Crim owned a hardware store, which fronted a mortuary, next to Ray's Pharmacy. Since Mattie could get a good discount on furniture, she and Fredericka went shopping in Dallas. Their three children, Otis Lucile, and E. F., spent many happy years growing up in their newly decorated and comfortable home.

E. F. Crim, Sr. had business interests in downtown Henderson, owning land from where the old movie theater was to the old Dyer Drugstore (now the Western Auto store and Hugs and Kisses Gift Shop, respectively). He has additions named for him inside the Henderson city limits as well as outside, Crim Crest and Crim's Chapel. E. F. was president of First National Bank and served on the Henderson school board. He was also a city alderman and the Sunday School superintendent at the First Baptist Church.¹⁹

During this period in Henderson history, community residents enjoyed many entertainment activities. For example, tent shows would be set up on North High, where the Suehs Clinic is now. Traveling members of the tent shows would need room and board, and would regularly stay at Kate Brown's home at 305 East Main, which she had turned into a boarding home. Since Kate Brown was a spinster, and her brother Charlie Brown remained a bachelor, together they ran the boarding house.

After the end of World War II, and after the death of his parents, E. F. Jr. became the owner of 310 East Main, where he was to live with his wife, Anna Katherine Elder Crim. Katherine Elder was born to Isaac Parker and Nina Butler Elder and raised in Greenville, Texas. E. F. met her in 1942, while enrolled in business school at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. He admired the beautiful Katherine, who was Homecoming Queen at Baylor in 1941 as well as a Baylor Beauty in the university annual.

When E. F., Jr. graduated from Baylor, he moved back to Henderson and entered the Air Force as a private in August 1942. He was stationed in Madison, Wisconsin and because of his father's illness, he got an emergency furlough, caught an American Airlines prop plane to Dallas and bus to Terrell, Texas. He was to rendezvous with his lovely wife Katherine who had driven to Terrell from Henderson so they could marry on December 14, 1942. The family then drove them to Longview to board the train to Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and he was stationed at Boca Raton, where he was to go to radar school. They played dominoes all the way on the train. He

¹⁹ "Elias Fleming and Mattie Spharler Crim House."

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Crim House
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and Katherine lived at the Boca Raton Air Force Base approximately three months. In May of 1943 he was sent to Bedford, England to a B-17 bomber base called Kimbolton Base, and did not return until July 4, 1945. During his absence, he was not allowed to divulge his location but he did manage to get through to Katherine that he had just visited the Catherine of Aragon Castle where Henry VIII had sent her. The castle is located at Kimbolton Township and E. F.'s Air Force Base was on the hill overlooking the township.

After the war, while E. F. Jr. and Katherine Crim had been living in 310 East Main, it was soon to transform into another function after serving as a wonderful family home. Because he wanted to help his older brother, Otis, they moved out so that his brother and Roy Tennison could partner a new mortuary business. 310 East Main was to become the Crim-Tennison Funeral Home, and would operate from the early 1950s until 1960. When E. F. Jr. and Katherine moved out, they made a new home at 301 Evenside in Crim Crest. Their three bedroom home was where they raised their three children, Elias Fleming III (known as Bob), Nina Kay, and Amanda Lou (Mandy).

During these years, Otis Crim and Roy Tennison operated a successful funeral home, but after Otis and Roy died within a few years of each other, the Crim-Tennison Funeral Home was closed down. Mrs. Otis Crim kept his interest in the insurance company that was inside the funeral home, known as the Otis Crim Insurance Company. This company provided only burial policies, and was one of the few funeral homes to provide burial insurance. There was another one in Marshall, Texas. E. F. Jr. and his wife, Katherine Elder Crim, moved back into 310 East Main, and made it their family home once more. E. F. turned the embalming room into his office, overlooking a lush landscape, Jacuzzi and pool that still occupy the backyard.

E. F. Crim Sr. was the President of the First National Bank for many years. He went to the Omen Business School, located between Henderson and Tyler. Since his earlier former education was limited to finishing the fourth grade, like many children during this time, he had to study business to get a job. He went to work for E. B. Alford Clothing Store, located where Main Street Gallery is now. That building also housed a hardware store and Reed's Dry Goods. After several years, E. F. Sr. decided to go into the banking business and he worked his way up from cashier to the presidency. E. F. Sr. also started and developed Crim Crest, a popular residential addition of Henderson. He also served as City Alderman, served on the Henderson school board, and was Sunday School Superintendent of the First Baptist Church.

Oil and gas investments and interests in the East Texas fields enabled the Crim family to be contributors and entrepreneurs in the real estate, funeral, hardware, and banking businesses. E. F. Crim, Sr. had a large farm on Highway 322. Henderson was enriched with his business acumen and hard work. His wife, Mattie Crim, was a homemaker, community contributor, loving wife and mother, and was a member of the first organized Parent Teacher Association in Henderson, begun by Mrs. Hubbard Chamberlain.

Like his father, E. F. Jr. also made many contributions to the City of Henderson. In 1953 and 1955, he served two sessions as a Representative in the State Legislature during Governor Alan Shivers' administration. This dedication to serve provided a wonderful environment and memory for his and Katherine's three children. They

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Crim House
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

loved living in Austin. The environment of education and learning inspired Bobby, Kay and Mandy to go on to higher learning. Bobby graduated from the University of Texas at Austin, and got his masters degree at the University of California. Kay graduated at Texas Christian University and Mandy graduated from North Texas State University. Kay was influenced to go to TCU because of Bob Mitchell, married to her aunt Lucile Crim Mitchell. Bob Mitchell played in the college band and was able to help Kay with a scholarship. He had Mitchell's Jewelry in Henderson until his death.

After his service in the state government, E. F. and Katherine returned to Henderson, where he served as the postmaster of Henderson from 1956-76. He was on the Henderson school board, the Kiwanis, and was Boy Scout counselor for many years. He served the First Baptist Church as deacon, where he has been a member for over seventy years, and also served on the Henderson Hospital Board of Directors. Katherine was a member of the Varied Arts Club, and was a community contributor and enjoyed bridge and mahjong with her many friends. While she tried to play golf with E. F., she found it did not suit her nearly as well as it did him.²⁰ Mrs. Crim was a gracious and lovely woman, and member of the local ladies groups, as well as teaching school. Katherine Elder Crim passed away July 13, 2002.

There have only been two owners of 310 East Main. On March 6, 1987, after 76 years under in the Crim family, E. F. and Katherine sold the house to Thelma Jane (Houston) Griffith. T. J. was born in Dallas on January 1, 1943, and is the daughter of Lewis Harrison (Sam) Houston, born March 10, 1902 and died January 15, 1982. T. J. grew up in Henderson, walked past the home on her way to school, and even attended funerals in the house that would become her home year later. Out of respect for the Crim family, and her love for the house, she spent five years restoring 310 East Main. In February, 2003, she obtained city approval for establishing Heritage House of Henderson, which is the only bed and breakfast in the city.

Conclusion

The Elias and Mattie Crim House is an excellent example of a Neoclassical style dwelling of the early twentieth century in Henderson. The house is a two-story brick and wood siding modified square plan house with a full-height entry porch with lower wrapped porch. The materials come both from local mills and from rail shipment from several states away. It has undergone minor changes since its construction in 1913, but retains integrity of location, setting, materials, design, workmanship, feeling and association to a high degree. The period of significance ends in 1935, the year the east elevation porches were enclosed and an outbuilding was added. These alterations do not detract significantly from the overall design and massing. The house is associated with Elias Fleming Crim and Mattie Spharler Crim, members of two pioneer families of Henderson that were active for many generations in business and civic affairs. Virtually unchanged from its original design, the house clearly conveys its historic significance and it is nominated for listing in the National Register under Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the local level of significance.

²⁰ Crim, E. F., Jr. interview.

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Crim House
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF PROPERTY: approximately 1.025 acres

UTM REFERENCES	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
	15	330680	3558600

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: Lot 3 in Block 3 of the W. M. Tate addition to the City of Henderson, according to the plat of said addition as the same appears of record in Volume 268, Page 388 of the Deed Records of Rusk County, Texas.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION: The boundary includes all property historically associated with the resource.

11. FORM PREPARED BY (with assistance from Bob Brinkman, historian, Texas Historical Commission)

NAME/TITLE: T. J. Griffith

ORGANIZATION:

DATE: April 6, 2005

STREET & NUMBER: 310 East Main Street

TELEPHONE: (903) 657-4797

CITY OR TOWN: Henderson

STATE: Texas

ZIP CODE: 75652

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

CONTINUATION SHEETS (see continuation sheets FIGURE-19 through FIGURE-23)

MAPS (see continuation sheet MAP-18 and topographic map)

PHOTOGRAPHS (see continuation sheet PHOTO-24)

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

PROPERTY OWNER

NAME: T. J. Griffith

STREET & NUMBER: 310 East Main Street

TELEPHONE: (903) 657-4797

CITY OR TOWN: Henderson

STATE: Texas

ZIP CODE: 75652

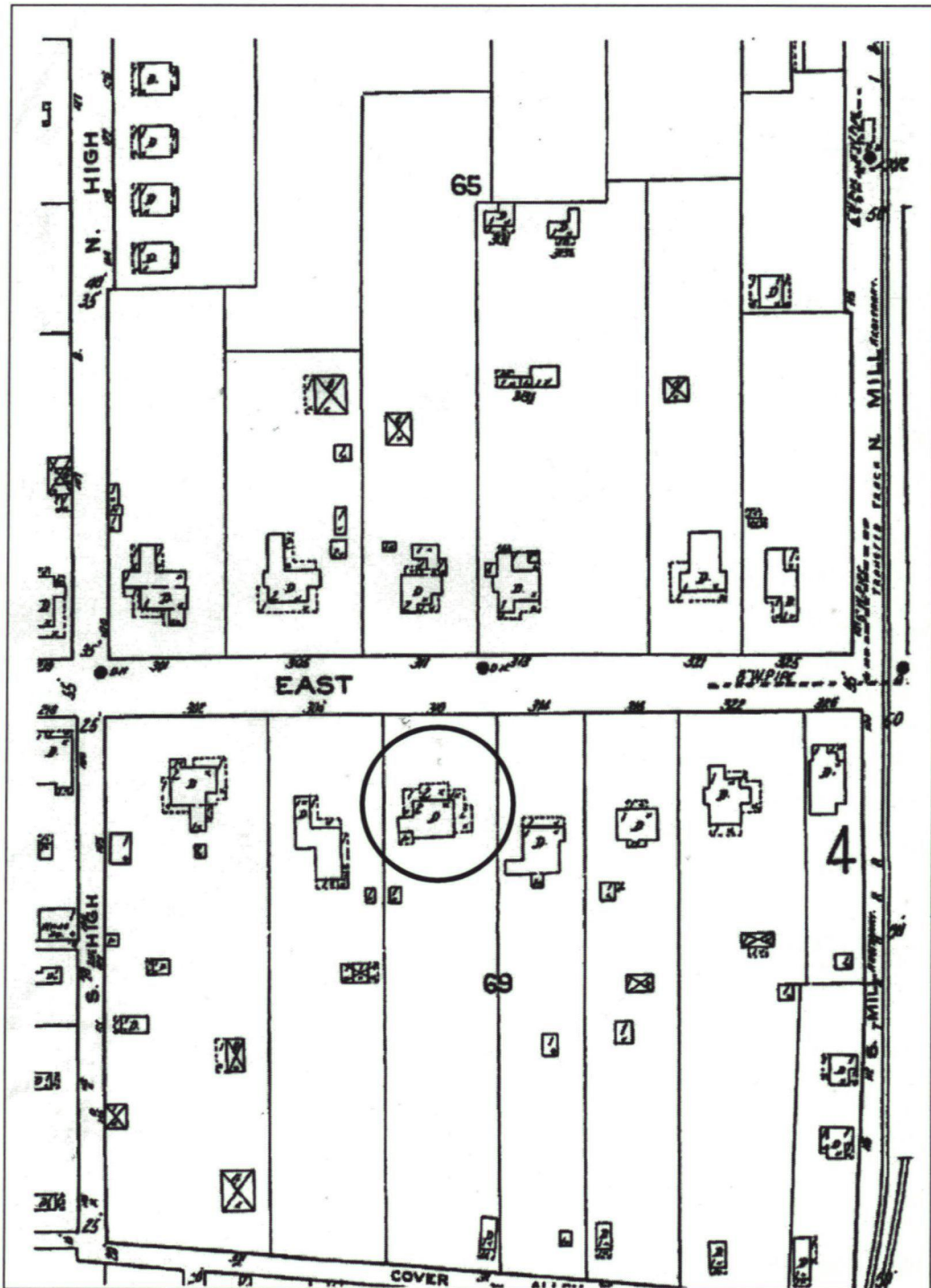
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Section MAP Page 18

Crim House
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Henderson, Texas, February 1919. Crim House circled at center.



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Section FIGURE Page 19

Crim House
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

Figure 1. Crim House northeast oblique, circa 1920. Camera facing southwest.



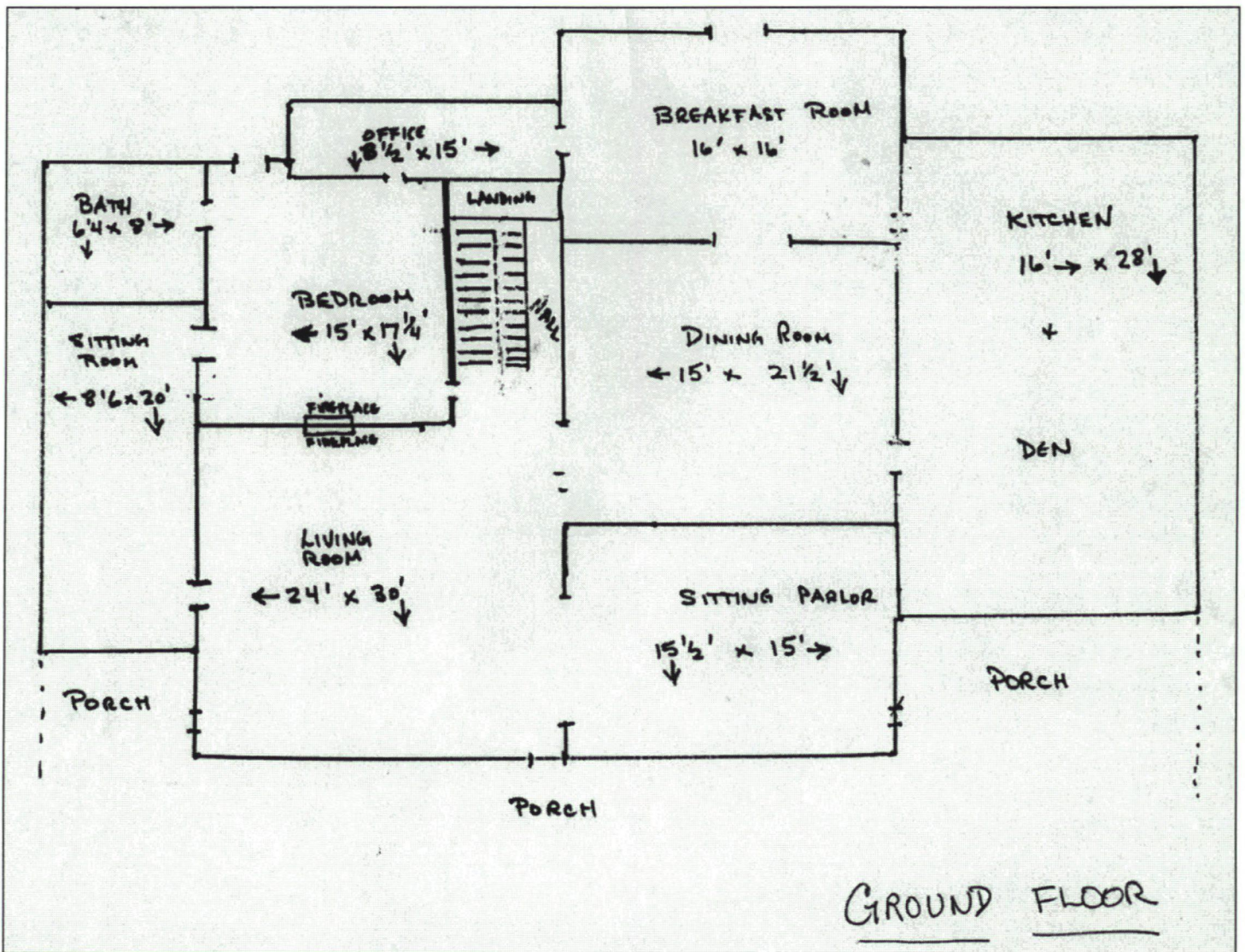
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Section FIGURE Page 20

Crim House
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

Figure 2. Crim House, first floor plan. North at bottom.



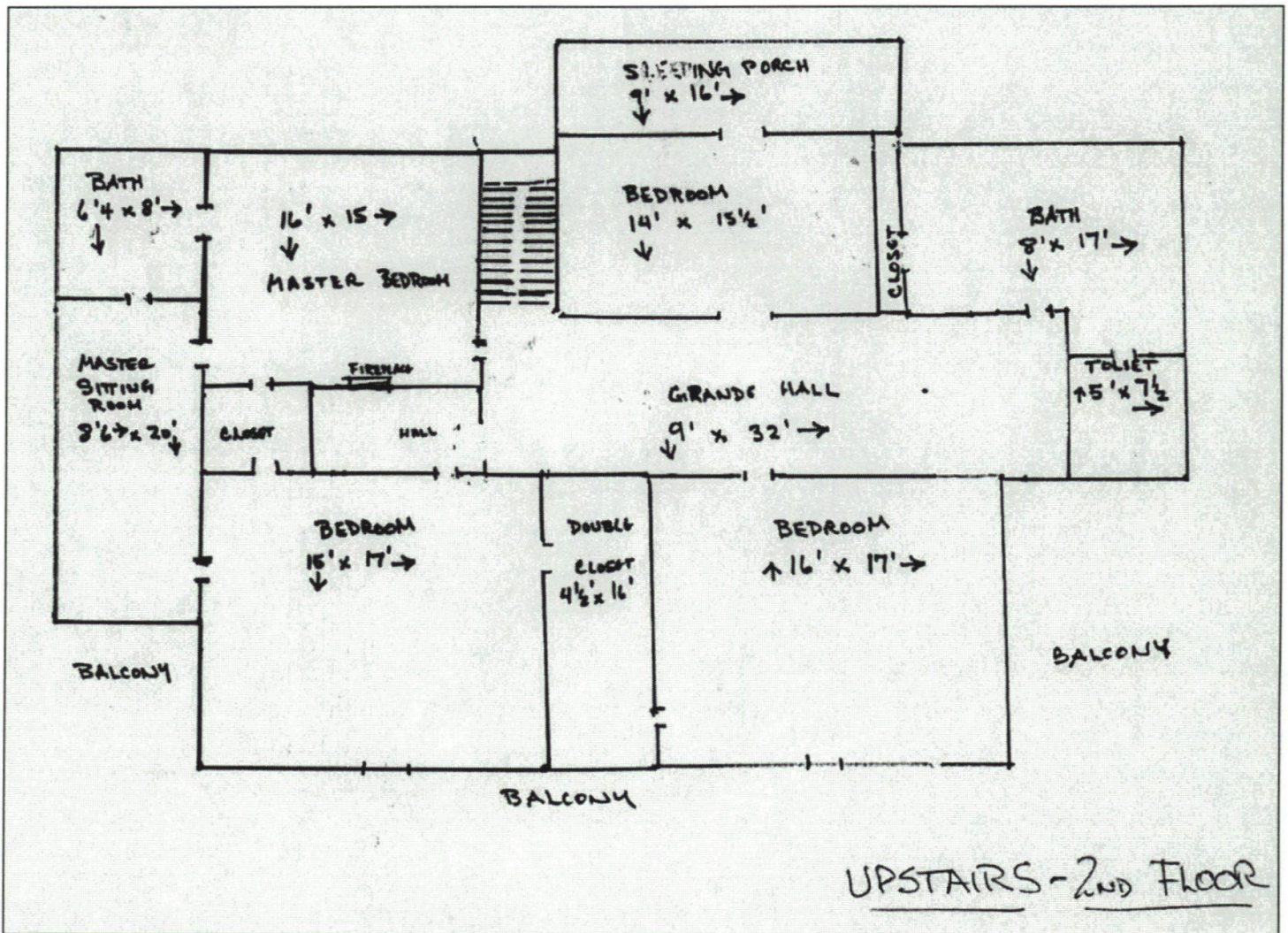
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Crim House
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Figure 3. Crim House, second floor plan. North at bottom.



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Section FIGURE Page 22

Crim House
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

Figure 4. Canary house, north elevation.



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Section FIGURE Page 23

Crim House
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Figure 5. Canary House, northwest oblique detail.



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Section PHOTO Page 24

**Crim House
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas**

Photograph Inventory

**Crim, Elias and Mattie, House
310 East Main Street
Henderson, Rusk County, Texas
Photographed by Adrienne Campbell, May 2005
Negatives on file at Texas Historical Commission**

Northwest oblique
Camera facing southeast
Photo 1 of 2

North elevation
Camera facing south
Photo 2 of 2

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Crim, Elias and Mattie, House
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Rusk

DATE RECEIVED: 7/06/05 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 7/26/05
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/10/05 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/19/05
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 05000892

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 8/17/05 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register

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.



CRIM HOUSE

310 E. MAIN ST.

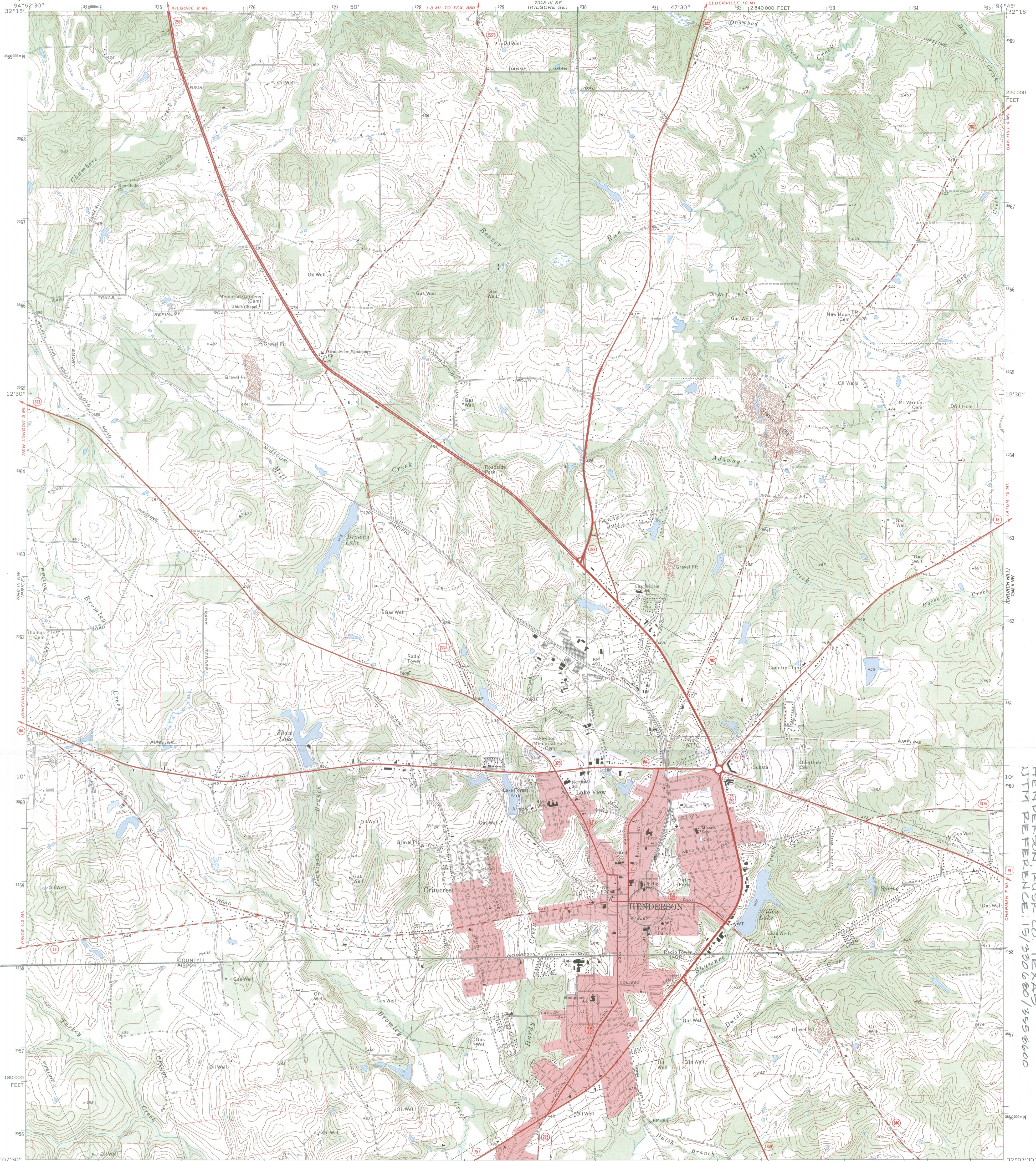
HENDERSON, RUSK CO., TX.

PHOTOGRAPH 1 of 2



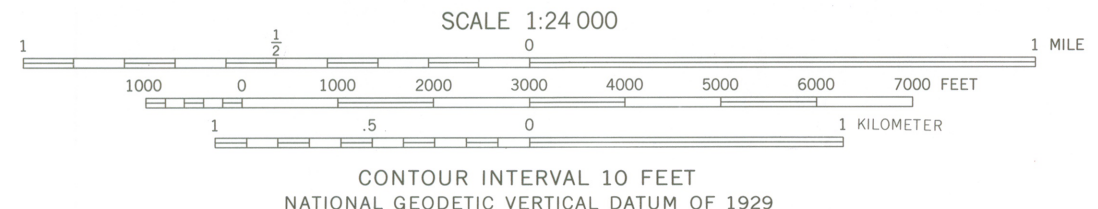
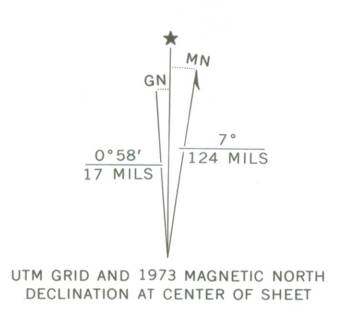
CRIM HOUSE
310 E. MAIN ST.
HENDERSON, RUSK CO., TX.

PHOTOGRAPH 2 of 2



CRIM HOUSE
SIDE MAIN STREET
HENDERSON, RUSK CO. TEXAS
UTM REFERENCE: 15/330680/3558600

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1971. Field checked 1973
Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Texas
coordinate system, north central zone (Lambert conformal conic)
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 15, shown in blue. 1927 North American Datum
Red tint indicates areas in which only land mark buildings are shown
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 13 meters south and
20 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

HENDERSON, TEX.
32094-B7-TF-024
1973
DMA 7048 III NE-SERIES V882

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

3294-224



**TEXAS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION**

Rick Perry • *Governor*
John L. Nau, III • *Chairman*
F. Lawrence Oaks • *Executive Director*

The State Agency for Historic Preservation



TO: Keeper
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Gregory W. Smith, National Register Coordinator
Texas Historical Commission

RE: Crim, Elias and Mattie, House, Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

DATE: June 27, 2005

The following materials are submitted regarding: Crim, Elias and Mattie, House, Henderson, Rusk County, Texas

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Original National Register of Historic Places form
<input type="checkbox"/>	Resubmitted nomination
<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiple Property nomination form
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Photographs
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	USGS map
<input type="checkbox"/>	Correspondence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:

COMMENTS:

SHPO requests substantive review

The enclosed owner objections (do) (do not) constitute a majority of property owners

Other _____