

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

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Granbury Elementary School
Other name/site number: NA
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 126 N. Morgan St.
City or town: Granbury State: Texas County: Hood
Not for publication: [] Vicinity: []

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this
[] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my
opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet) the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:
[] national [] statewide [] local

Applicable National Register Criteria: [] A [] B [] C [] D

Signature of certifying official / Title: Mark Wolfe, State Historic Preservation Officer
Date: 11/29/2021
Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
[] entered in the National Register
[] determined eligible for the National Register
[] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[] removed from the National Register
[] other, explain:

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Granbury Elementary School, Granbury, Hood County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Private |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Public - Local |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Public - State |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Public - Federal |

Category of Property

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | district |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | object |

Number of Resources within Property

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

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: EDUCATION: School

Current Functions: EDUCATION: Non-profit School

7. Description

Architectural Classification: MODERN MOVEMENT: Modernistic, Art Deco

Principal Exterior Materials: BRICK, CONCRETE

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 6-9)

Granbury Elementary School, Granbury, Hood County, Texas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A

Criteria Considerations: NA

Areas of Significance: Education (*local*)

Period of Significance: 1935-1962

Significant Dates: 1935

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

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

Architect/Builder: C.M. Love and Company Architects and Engineers (architect), Abilene Construction Company (builder)

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 10-17)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheets 18-20)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. Part 1 approved on (date)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

Granbury Elementary School, Granbury, Hood County, Texas

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Less than one acre (approximately 0.147 acres)

Coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 32.442853°N Longitude: -97.794017°W

Verbal Boundary Description: The nominated boundary includes approximately 0.147 acres on the western edge of the larger 3 acre legal parcel identified as MILAM CO – ABST 348 (Property ID R000043559), Granbury, Hood County, Texas (CAD Data accessed May 20, 2021)(Map 3).

Boundary Justification: The nominated boundary includes approximately 0.147 acres on the western edge of the larger 3 acre legal parcel identified as MILAM CO – ABST 348 (Property ID R000043559), Granbury, Hood County, Texas. The boundary is drawn to include historic 1935 Granbury Elementary School and exclude the parking lot and cafeteria building to the north.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Mary G. Saltarelli
Organization: Preserve Granbury
Street & number: 5703 Medinah Drive
City or Town: Granbury State: TX Zip Code: 76049
Email: maryestellegott@sbcglobal.net
Telephone: 817-559-1596
Date: March 30, 2021

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheets 21-23)
Additional items (see continuation sheets 24-33)
Photographs (see continuation sheets 5, 34-39)

Granbury Elementary School, Granbury, Hood County, Texas

Photograph Log

Name of Property: Granbury Elementary School
City or Vicinity: Granbury
County: Hood
State: Texas
Photographer: Mary G. Saltarelli
Date: March 24, 2021 (unless otherwise noted)

Photo 1

East or front façade, camera facing west

Photo 2

West elevation, camera facing east

Photo 3

North elevation oblique angle, camera facing southwest

Photo 4

South elevation, camera facing north

Photo 5

East entryway, camera facing west

Photo 6

Inside east entryway looking up, camera facing west (May 15, 2018)

Photo 7

North end of the original interior north-south hallway, camera facing north

Photo 8

East entry with its short entrance hall, camera facing northeast

Photo 9

South end of the original interior north-south hallway, camera facing south

Photo 10

Interior of chimney on west wall, camera facing west

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

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

Granbury Elementary School, Granbury, Hood County, Texas

Narrative Description

Granbury Elementary School is located at 126 N. Morgan Street in Granbury, Hood County, Texas. It is centrally located on the western side of a large parking lot 6 blocks west of the Hood County Courthouse Square. Architecture firm C.M. Love and Company Architects and Engineers of Fort Worth designed the school in 1935 as a one-story rectangular Modernistic building with Art Deco geometric cast stone detailing largely concentrated on the symmetrical primary facade. The red brick building has recessed entrances and a flat roof outlined with cast stone coping. A four-foot brick parapet wall extends above the roof along three sides of the building. Changes include new windows—now covered with dark screens, replacement doors, and floor plan alterations. Despite these modifications, Granbury Elementary School exhibits a high level of historic integrity.

Location & Setting

Block 42, bounded by West Pearl Street to the south, North Hannaford Street to the east, West Bridge Street to the north, and North Morgan Street to the west, has historically been the location of Granbury's schools since the late nineteenth century (Maps 2-4, Figures 1-3, 7-10). Granbury Elementary School is located on the western edge of what is now a parking lot at 126 N. Morgan Street. A concrete sidewalk extends along the east or front elevation and the north and south elevations of the school. Before Granbury Elementary School was built, Block 42 was home to a two-story frame school built in 1891 along North Hannaford Street (Figure 7). A three-story monumental brick school built in 1917 on the north side of the lot along West Bridge Street followed the frame school (Figures 1, 8). Each of these multi-floor schools served as Granbury's only school building and housed all student grade levels from first through high school. The multi-story buildings were demolished and most of Block 42 is now an asphalt parking lot. Granbury Elementary School faces east on the site. For many years, the large parking lot in front of Granbury Elementary has been used for community events.

An L-shaped red brick building is located just north of Granbury Elementary. In 1944, a new cafeteria was built of tile along North Morgan Street, near the north end of the 1935 elementary school. This small cafeteria, which replaced the cafeteria built in 1938, has endured many additions and changes over the years. Within one year of opening, it was covered with stucco. In 1952, the lunchroom was remodeled and enlarged to twice its size with a new capacity to serve 500 meals, which created the L-shaped building that exists today. The cafeteria closed when students moved to a new elementary school in 1962. During the summer of 1964, the cafeteria was clad in brick to match the elementary school and converted into a vocational training center. In 1985 to 1986, the cafeteria was once again remodeled to become a school board meeting room. During one of the remodels of the cafeteria, at least one window was added along the north elevation and the main entrance was relocated to the east end of the north elevation. Today, there is a metal canopy covering a concrete walkway that leads from the north entrance of Granbury Elementary to the south entrance of the former meeting room. Due to the significant exterior and interior changes that have occurred to this building outside the period of significance ending in 1962, the cafeteria no longer retains historic and architectural integrity and is excluded from the nominated boundary.

As the school district grew and needs increased for additional facilities, it acquired lots north and west of Block 42. To the north, across West Bridge Street, are school buildings no longer used by Granbury Independent School District. Decker Gymnasium, built in 1949, is located on the east end of the block at the corner of West Bridge Street and North Hannaford Street. The gymnasium and ball fields behind it are now owned by the City of Granbury. To the northwest along North Jones Street, is the elementary school built in 1962, which is now used by Weatherford College for classes. Behind the school to the east are auxiliary buildings built around the school over the years. The integrity of the other buildings within the larger school complex have not been evaluated and thus are not being nominated.

Granbury Elementary School, Granbury, Hood County, Texas

Exterior

An example of Modernistic architecture, Granbury Elementary exhibits symmetry of design, a one-story horizontal emphasis, recessed entryways, and Art Deco geometric cast stone architectural embellishments (Photos 1-6). The school was built in a rectangular shape that is eighty-four and a half feet wide and fifty-three and a half feet deep. The red brick walls are eleven and a half feet tall from the top of the school's concrete foundation. Each wall features a soldier course of red brick along the top of the foundation. A four-foot brick parapet wall extends above the flat roof along three sides of the building. Entries on the east, north, and south sides of the building are recessed seven feet. There are twenty-two large windows along the east and west facades of the school, providing natural light and fresh air for students.

Primary (East) Elevation

The school's east elevation, or front façade, features a central recessed entryway flanked by two brick pilasters and surrounded by Art Deco cast stone detailing (Figure 9, Photos 1, 5-6). A stylized cast stone cornice with geometric designs surmounts the entryway and extends above the parapet two feet and down the pilasters. The center of the geometric cornice features the year "1935" and "Granbury" engraved in the cast stone. In the entryway opening are five copper floral ornaments facing downward. The single replacement aluminum door within the entryway has sidelights and a transom. Three concrete steps lead up to the entryway and the stairway more than spans the entire opening. The east elevation features five window openings symmetrically placed on either side of the central entryway in a B-C-A configuration moving outward from the door. The smaller, slightly raised windows indicate where the restrooms were. While the fenestration pattern is intact, its original windows and doors were replaced at an unknown date. Former student Cody Martin remembered that during the late 1950s and early 1960s, the windows operated with hand-cranked mechanisms.¹ Today, the openings feature one-over-one aluminum windows. Each window has a brick soldier-course cornice and a wrap-around cast stone sill. Dropping down from the coping above each grouping of windows is a cast stone geometric design that repeats the design on the pilasters. On either side of the geometric designs are two small cast stone squares.

North, South, and West Elevations

The recessed entryways on the north and south elevations feature brick stair-stepped rises of two feet above the parapet walls that span the widths of the entryways (Photos 3-4). A cast stone scroll decorates the sides of each raised parapet. Above the entryways and below the raised parapets are centered cast stone squares that recall the design of the east elevation. The entryway on the south side has a shallow concrete ramp while the entryway on the north side has concrete stairs. Both entryways contain single aluminum replacement doors with sidelights and a transom. The north side entryway also features a metal canopy that is not original to the building. Inside the recessed entryways to the east are door openings that once led into restrooms; they are now enclosed with wood. There are no window openings on the north and south elevations.

The west elevation of the school faces N. Morgan Street and features three groups of windows (Photo 2). Each group features a double window flanked by two single windows. All of the windows have cast stone sills. A brick fireplace extends above the roofline of the west wall between the group of windows closest to the south end and the central group of windows. Inside the building, the enclosed chimney projects from the interior west wall.

¹ Cody Martin, interview with Mary G. Saltarelli, Granbury, Texas, March 5, 2021.

Granbury Elementary School, Granbury, Hood County, Texas

Interior Layout

Granbury Independent School District still owns the elementary school, but the district no longer has any original plans, specifications, or architectural designs for the building. According to the local newspaper in 1935, plans for Granbury Elementary School called for five classrooms with a central hallway running north and south within the length of the building, steel lockers, an electric signal clock, and blackboards.² The March 1945 update of Granbury's Sanborn Fire Insurance Map depicts the basic layout: the east façade, or front doorway leads into a wide entry hall that ends in a longer hallway that runs north and south (Figure 2). Joyce Burks Dorsey, who attended classes in 1959 to 1961, remembered two classrooms on the east side of the building and three classrooms on the west side of the north-south hallway (Figure 4).³ The classroom in the northeast corner of the building was modified to contain the principal's office, which was accessed from the entry hallway. Within the office was an area where students could purchase school supplies. Dorsey also remembered that the restrooms were located at the north and south ends of the school on the east side and were accessed outside, within the recessed entryways. The boy's restroom was on the south end and the girl's restroom was on the north end (Figure 5). On the exterior of the building along the southeast corner was a public water fountain that has since been removed.⁴

In 1964, after a new elementary opened, some local teachers, coaches and National Youth Corp students remodeled the interior of Granbury Elementary to accommodate high school home economics and business classrooms, including adding four or five small kitchens. After a new high school opened in 1973 the building was briefly used for kindergarten, and then the school board voted in 1976 to remodel Granbury Elementary School into administration offices. That may be when the windows and doors were replaced, because students who attended during the early 1960s remember the casement windows.

In 2017, Granbury Independent School District moved its administration offices out of the old elementary school. In 2018, the district leased the building to Forward Training Center, a nonprofit group that provides adult education and life-skills training. Today, the layout of the interior still retains the entryway at the east or front entrance of the building. The south half of the building still contains the north-south hallway. Part of the hallway on the north end has been enclosed for HVAC closets (Figures 4-6). Interior finishes today include sheetrock, painted wood paneling, dropped-tile ceilings, carpeting, and laminate strip floors.

Alterations

The exterior of Granbury Elementary School has had very few changes over the years. These include window and door replacements likely added in 1976. The windows are now covered with dark screens. Changes to the interior were more drastic. While the east entryway and the south half of the north-south hallway are intact, the rest of the floor plan was reconfigured in 1976. No interior historic features are visually evident except an interior chimney on the south side of the west wall that was utilized for a wood stove. However, there are dropped-tile ceilings, wood paneling, sheetrock, and laminate floors that have been added over the years that could be covering historic materials. An exterior water fountain and playground equipment were removed at an unknown date and a metal walkway was added at the north elevation.

² "Modern Elementary Building for Granbury School," *Granbury News*, July 19, 1935, 3.

³ Joyce Burks Dorsey, "Granbury Elementary School," Facebook, March 8, 2021, 2:58 and 3:01 p.m., https://www.facebook.com/groups/182952398405352/permalink/4061604797206740/?comment_id=4061689510531602&reply_comment_id=4061739207193299.

⁴ *Ibid.*

Granbury Elementary School, Granbury, Hood County, Texas

Integrity

The Granbury Elementary School remains in its original location, but the historic setting has been compromised due to the demolition of all but one early 20th century historic school building, the cafeteria to the north, and it is now surrounded by a large open parking lot. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship is evident in the original Modernistic design featuring geometric Art Deco cast stone detailing, symmetrical façade, original rectangular footprint and fenestration pattern, original materials, and partially intact floor plan and chimney. Former students would recognize this as the same building today, thus providing the feeling of a small 1930s elementary school. Owned by the Granbury Independent School District, the building is being used by a local non-profit group, Forward Training Center, which conducts adult education training and classes at no cost to participants, and thus the property remains associated with education.

Granbury Elementary School, Granbury, Hood County, Texas

Statement of Significance

Granbury Elementary School is located at 126 N. Morgan Street in Granbury, Texas. The property is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Education at the local level of significance. In Texas, traditional one-room schoolhouses, and multi-room schoolhouses served all grades from first through high school. By the mid-1930s, many family farms were lost due to financial hardship, and loss of population caused many small rural schools to close. The influx of new students from these small communities caused a need for additional facilities, and in 1935 Granbury Independent School District built Granbury Elementary. Unlike school districts in surrounding North Texas towns, Granbury built its elementary school using local bond funds without assistance from federal New Deal programs. As the community's first public elementary school building for whites, Granbury Elementary School represented a move away from the schoolhouse and opened a new era for Granbury schools, where teachers instructed students in two multi-grade level buildings. Since Granbury Independent School District did not integrate its schools until the 1963-1964 academic year, which was after the new elementary school opened, it remained a white school during the period of significance. The property serves as an example of a 1930s Modernistic school with Art Deco detailing designed by Fort Worth architecture firm C.M. Love and Company Architects and Engineers. Abilene Construction Company served as the builder. The period of significance is from its construction in 1935 through 1962, when the school district constructed a new elementary school, and the building was no longer solely used for public elementary education.

History of Granbury Schools

Pioneers from the Upland South surged into the North Central region of Texas after it became a state in 1845, with the first Anglo settlers venturing west of the Brazos River in the 1850s. Like settlers throughout Texas, they built a schoolhouse in each small community and families hired and paid the teacher. In 1900, W. H. Barker, an early resident of Hood County, shared his memories of education in the county's first settlements, and recalled that families paid their community's teacher from one dollar to one dollar and fifty cents per student. He remembered attending school in a log cabin with dirt floors and long hand-hewn wooden benches.⁵ Recognizing a need to support public education in the new state, Texas leaders established a permanent school fund for public schools in 1854. The Texas legislature created Hood County in 1866, and by 1871, residents established Granbury, the county seat, along a bend in the Brazos River. There is record of a public school in Granbury in 1871, taught by A. P. Harbin. The school's enrollment was so high that year that Harbin had to hire an assistant to teach the girls. In 1874, Hood County had a board of school directors with four members presided over by Granbury merchant A.P. Gordon, who also served as school examiner and county superintendent.

County Judge T.J. Duke created a Granbury Community School in 1883 in response to a petition from three community leaders, W.A. Duke, A.P. Gordon, and H.E. Hanna. Judge Duke appointed the petitioners as trustees and designated \$650.09 from the county treasury for "maintenance of their public school."⁶ The location of this school in Granbury is unknown.

In 1873, the Methodist District opened Granbury College and High School in a rock building on the southeast corner of the Hood County Courthouse square, and by 1875, citizens of Granbury raised the money to construct a three-story limestone building on a prominent hill north of the courthouse square. This building burned down in 1887 but was soon replaced by another three-story limestone building on the same spot. A series of wet years during the early 1880s

⁵ "County Schools Had Humble Beginning," *Hood County News-Tablet*, August 11, 1966, 16.

⁶ "Granbury Schools Have Colorful Past," *Hood County News*, February 28, 1974, 8.

Granbury Elementary School, Granbury, Hood County, Texas

benefited the local agricultural economy. Along with the arrival of the Fort Worth and Rio Grande Railroad in 1887, it caused an economic boom in Granbury and Hood County. In the early twentieth century, the county boasted a population of 10,008 and Granbury had 2,250 residents.⁷

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, public education in Granbury and Hood County moved from one-room school houses to one central school housing several different grades from one through high school. Texas followed the lead of Horace Mann, Secretary of Education in Massachusetts, who advocated for the development of grade levels during the 1830s and 1840s to make American education more efficient. In August 1891, the City of Granbury purchased Block 42, six blocks west of the Hood County Courthouse Square, from Catherine Crites for \$1,200.⁸ The city constructed a frame, two-story schoolhouse with a central tower and wrap-around front porch on the eastern edge of the lot, facing east along North Hannaford Street. This lot, where Granbury Elementary School is now located, remained the historic location of Granbury school buildings for more than 100 years (Figures 1-2, 7-10).

Granbury's new public school for white students opened on November 23, 1891, with grades one through six and three years of high school (Figure 7). Only resident students ages eight through sixteen could attend for free. Students of other ages and other communities could attend by paying the city from one dollar and fifty cents to three dollars per month depending on the grade level.⁹ By December 8, the editor of the *Granbury News* reported that enrollment in the new school had reached two hundred forty-one pupils, and "still they come."¹⁰

In 1893, County Judge George Riddle apportioned state funding at a rate of five dollars per student to thirty-eight community schools within Hood County, including the City of Granbury public school and its segregated African American school.¹¹ Before the 1900 to 1901 school term, the Granbury School Board hired five female teachers and two male administrators. Superintendent J.D. Sandeler received a raise to one hundred dollars per month to entice him to remain for the eight-month school year.

Granbury's growth and prosperity led city voters to approve twenty-five thousand dollars in bonds in 1917 to construct a masonry school building "on the block of land upon which the present old school building has been situated for several years."¹² That year, the city constructed a three-story school building of red brick that replaced the existing frame school building, which was demolished (Figure 8). After the school opened, the students of Granbury High School published their first yearbook, called "The Peak." Students' pride in their new school is reflected in the full-page black-and-white photo of the building on page six and in the framed small photo of it along the lower border of each page of the yearbook. They dedicated their first yearbook to "the defenders of the red, white and blue." The yearbook features photos of four high school teachers who instructed seventeen seniors, fourteen juniors, eighteen sophomores and sixteen freshmen.¹³

During the late nineteenth century, a series of state laws granted cities and towns more freedom to develop and administer schools, leading to the creation of local independent school districts; by 1900, Texas boasted five hundred twenty-six. State voters passed the Better Schools Amendment in 1920, allowing increases in local taxation for education. These changes led residents to approve creation of Granbury Independent School District in May 1923, empowering the district to assume the city's school bond indebtedness, and taxing residents at a rate of seventy-five

⁷ Sanborn Insurance Company Map of Granbury, Hood County Texas, 1910, Library of Texas online.

⁸ "Granbury Schools Have Colorful Past," *Hood County News*, February 28, 1974, 8.

⁹ "The Public School to Open Next Monday," *Granbury News*, November 19, 1891, 1.

¹⁰ *Granbury News*, December 10, 1891, 8.

¹¹ "School Fund Apportionment," *Granbury News*, September 28, 1893, 1.

¹² City of Granbury, City Council Minutes, February 20, 1918, available at the Granbury Depot Archives.

¹³ *The Peak*, (Granbury: Student Body of Granbury High School, 1918).

Granbury Elementary School, Granbury, Hood County, Texas

cents per one-hundred-dollar evaluation of property.¹⁴ According to the editor of the *Granbury News*, this authorization by the legislature and endorsement by local voters “takes all school affairs out of the hands of the city council.” The editor wrote that citizens concerned about school management “think this plan far better than the divided responsibility of the past.”¹⁵ After the creation of Granbury Independent School District, enrollment in Spring 1924 was two hundred sixty-three, up from 200 in Fall 1923, and the 1924 graduation of seven seniors “marked the closing of one of the most successful school years of this institution.”¹⁶

By the mid-1930s, improved transportation from rural communities to the city caused a need for additional facilities and the school board built Granbury Elementary in 1935. The elementary school opened a new era for Granbury schools, where teachers instructed students in two multi-grade level classroom buildings. By the 1946-1947 school year, five hundred ten students attended Granbury public schools, housed in five buildings, all standing on Block 42: the five-room elementary for grades one to five; the nine-room, three-story building for all other grades; a small shop building used for vocational and agricultural classes; and a small cafeteria.¹⁷

In November 1947, voters approved annexing nine smaller school districts into Granbury Independent School District. The school districts were Thorp Spring, Waples, Fairview, Neri, Temple Hall, Rough Creek, Friendship, Rocky Point, and Shady Grove. Between 1958 and 1969, Mambrino, Acton, and Cresson schools consolidated into Granbury Independent School District, creating a district that encompassed 244 square miles. With this growth, Granbury School District hired Fort Worth architect Wyatt Hedrick, who designed Will Rogers Auditorium among hundreds of other Texas buildings, to design and oversee construction of the community’s first gymnasium and auditorium for approximately \$49,000. After Superintendent W.F. Decker passed away suddenly during construction, the school board voted to name the building Decker Gym in his honor. Thomas H. Cadenhead and Sons of Fort Worth constructed the gymnasium and auditorium on existing ball fields on Block 41, located across West Bridge Street north of the 1917 three-story brick building.

During the 1950s, Granbury School District built a new mid-century modern one-story high school, designed by Stanley Brown of Dallas, just west of Decker Gym on the south side of Block 41. At the end of the decade, the district added a junior high school wing on the west end of the high school. The 1960s began with the district building a new elementary school and cafeteria behind the high school and junior high school, on the west side of Block 41, facing west. After it opened, the district demolished the 1917 three-story brick school building on Block 42 in 1965.

Due to racial segregation in the Jim Crow era, African American children in Granbury attended a separate public school located within their small north-side community. In 1946, Granbury school district built a new school for African American students and hired one teacher, Eva May Williams, to teach there. In 1954, the district added new restrooms in the “East Ward” school and sidewalks beside and in front of it, and Ms. Curlie Lee Gates taught fourteen students. With their school offering a single teacher and one school for all pupils regardless of age, African American high school students were often not attending. Mrs. Leonard and her son Ernest came before the school board in 1955 to discuss how to keep African American high school students in school. The issue was not addressed again until 1957, when school board members discussed opening a high school for African American students in the Baptist Church in their north-side neighborhood. Instead, board members decided to transport African American high school students to Lake Como High School in Fort Worth.

¹⁴ “Statement from School Board,” *Granbury News*, May 25, 1923, 5.

¹⁵ *Granbury News*, June 1, 1923, 1.

¹⁶ “Granbury High School Closes,” *Granbury News*, 1.

¹⁷ W.F. Decker and Joe Enoch, Letter to Surplus Property Utilization Program, June 15, 1947, Granbury School Board Minutes, Available at Granbury Independent School District’s Superintendent’s Office.

Granbury Elementary School, Granbury, Hood County, Texas

Nine years after the Supreme Court of the United States made its landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, Barefoot Sanders, United States Attorney from the Northern District of Texas, wrote a letter to the Granbury school district. During the school board meeting on March 12, 1963, the letter was read to trustees, and the minutes reflected that it was about “financial benefits under the impact of area program and maintaining racially segregated schools.”¹⁸ In response to the letter, members first considered operating the African American school one more year while preparing a proposed plan of integration. But faced with the loss of more than fifteen thousand dollars in federal funding, Granbury board members voted on August 26 to “completely integrate the Granbury School District for the 1963-64 school year,” admitting thirteen African American students to twelve grades on the district’s main campuses.¹⁹

From 1958 to 1969, average daily attendance in Granbury’s schools grew by almost two hundred students and a beginner teacher’s pay rose more than two thousand dollars. As the community braced for more growth and new development following the creation of Lake Granbury in 1969, a reporter for the *Granbury News* wrote:

We cannot bury our heads in the Brazos River Sands. Within a few short months sailboats and water skiers will replace the giant pecan and oak trees . . . The Granbury School District will need new classrooms, new student desks and equipment, and more teachers. The lack of a good education system can spoil the student as easily as sparing the rod.²⁰

The 1970s brought revitalization and progress to Granbury with the creation of the lake and restoration of the courthouse and its square. Anticipated growth materialized, and, in 1971, voters approved a 2.2-million-dollar bond to construct a new high school. Located 1.4 miles west of the courthouse square, the modern building featured eighty thousand square feet and accommodations for seven hundred fifty students, with flexibility to expand to serve fifteen hundred students. The watershed developments that necessitated a new high school ushered in a period of rapid change and development for Granbury and its school system. At the beginning of the 2019 school year, Granbury Independent School District had reached a size of two hundred fifty-four square miles with seventy-three hundred students enrolled for classes on ten campuses.²¹

Granbury Elementary School

As the population of the country grew and became increasingly urban and suburban instead of rural, the one-room schoolhouse gave way to the multi-room schoolhouse, which became multiple schools. In Texas during the Great Depression, severe drought encouraged this trend toward urban living as farmers migrated to towns and cities for economic opportunities. Ninety-four families in Hood County lost their farms between 1930 and 1935, and the population of Granbury grew from nine-hundred ninety-six in 1930 to one thousand, one hundred sixty-six in 1940, and then to one thousand six hundred eighty-three in 1950.²² Financial hardship and loss of population caused many small rural schools to close throughout Texas. In Granbury, the 1934 school year opened with an expectation of

¹⁸ Granbury Independent School District Board Meeting Minutes, March 12, 1963.

¹⁹ “184 Texas School Districts Facing Loss of Federal Aid,” *Dallas Morning News*, April 10, 1962, Section 1, 4; “40 Schools Join Integrated List,” *Dallas Morning News*, March 25, 1964, Section 1, 4 and Granbury Independent School District Board Meeting Minutes, August 26, 1963.

²⁰ “Comparison of Ten Year Period Shows Changes in Granbury School District,” *Hood County News Tablet*, July 24, 1969, 1.

²¹ “Granbury ISD Innovation. Engagement. Leadership,” *Granburysd.org*, www.granburysd.org, August, 2019.

²² “Hood County Reports Fewer Farms,” *Dallas Morning News*, March 12, 1935, Section II, 7 and “Texas Almanac: City Population History from 1850-2000,” <https://texasalmanac.com/sites/default/files/images/CityPopHist%20web.pdf>, accessed June 15, 2021.

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increased enrollment because several smaller schools in the county discontinued one or more upper grades.²³ Improved transportation in the early 20th century enabled districts like Granbury to bus children from rural areas to town.

Faced with increasing population, growing numbers of rural transfer students, and just one eighteen-year-old building housing all grades, Granbury Independent School District planned for a new elementary school. On February 5, 1935, members of the board of the Granbury Independent School District voted to submit a twelve-thousand-dollar school bond for a new elementary school with five classrooms to a vote of the people.²⁴ District board members appointed local banker J.N. Nutt and newspaper publisher A.B. Crawford as a two-man committee for publicity for the “building campaign.” In a local newspaper ad on March 29, board members touted to voters the impact the new school would have on the community. The school would provide labor for the community’s unemployed workers and facilitate new classes like vocational agriculture, domestic science, bookkeeping and typing. According to the ad, these improvements offered students the same educational opportunities found in neighboring towns and would result in Granbury becoming one of the highest accredited schools in Texas.²⁵ The school bond campaign was the first-ever building effort for the district. The day before the election, held on April 6, Nutt wrote a column in the local paper assuring residents that the bond would not increase their school taxes. He explained that the state, in an effort toward “decreasing present rural school expenses,” paid the Granbury district \$52.25 for each transfer student. With an expectation of an increasing number of rural transfer students each year, the school board expected to pay the bonds well before their maturity date.²⁶ Local voters approved the building bond election resoundingly by a vote of 79 to 27.²⁷

On June 4, the school board decided to build the school with local bond funds and not request additional funds from the federal government’s New Deal programs. This decision was exceptional, because during the Depression many surrounding cities and school districts utilized New Deal funds for infrastructure and educational improvements, including the City of Granbury, which financed its first sanitary sewer system through the National Recovery act in 1933. Within a month, Fort Worth architect C.M. Love presented plans and specifications for the new elementary school to board members and meeting minutes record that they “discussed them at length.”²⁸

Influences of the national Progressive Education Movement reached Granbury during the 1920s and 1930s, contributing to the construction of Granbury Elementary School. More effective and centralized school management came with the establishment of Granbury Independent School District in 1923. The Progressive movement toward more school buildings in order to focus education on individual students led to an increase in schools, and the construction of Granbury Elementary, the district’s first grade-specific school. The district’s plans to offer more vocational education classes in the space gained in the existing school reflected a trend that developed during the Progressive movement. The design of Granbury Elementary exemplified some tenets of the Progressive Movement: Twenty-two large windows reflected the trend to allow for more light and fresh air in a school building and the school’s wide central hallway provided easy access for classrooms to interact together.

June 1935, the Granbury school board approved a ten-thousand-dollar contract with Abilene Construction Company to build the school and voted to purchase the brick at twenty-three dollars per thousand from Builders Material Company of Mineral Wells.²⁹ By July 19, workers built the foundation for a five-room red-brick elementary school building. In early August, workers had already completed half of the new school’s brick walls, ensuring it would be open in the fall

²³ “Granbury School Opens Monday September 10th,” *Granbury News*, September 7, 1934, 1.

²⁴ Granbury Independent School District Board Meeting Minutes, February 5, 1935

²⁵ “Vote for the School Bond,” *Granbury News*, March 29, 1935, p. 5.

²⁶ “Proposed School Bonds Will Not Affect Taxes,” *The Granbury News*, April 5, 1935, p. 1.

²⁷ “School Bonds Carried in Last Saturday Election,” *The Granbury News*, April 12, 1935, p. 1.

²⁸ Granbury Independent School District Minutes, May 2, 1935.

²⁹ Granbury Independent School District Minutes, June 4, 1935.

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for the 1935-1936 term. Granbury Elementary opened September 16, 1935, with these teachers: Mrs. Claude Covey, first grade; Miss Audie Price, second; Mrs. Lucylie Dennis, third; Miss Kitty Stewart, fourth; Miss Bobbie Williams, fifth; and Mrs. J. Hale, sixth. Granbury's Parent-Teacher Association sponsored a dedication for the new building on September 27. A reporter for the *Granbury News* wrote that a large crowd attended, eager to see the new school, "among the most modern of this type," and that "the entire community is proud of this addition to our school system."³⁰ At the dedication ceremony, five community leaders addressed the crowd, and Mayor A.B. Crawford spoke about the city's interest in its schools.

In 1953, the school district constructed a new high school, across West Bridge Street from the 1935 elementary school. When the new high school opened, Granbury Elementary became a primary school for students in the first two grades, and the 1917 three-story brick building housed the older elementary grades. In 1955, fifty-two first-grade students and sixty-six second-grade students attended classes in Granbury Elementary School.³¹ In 1962, the district built a new elementary school behind the high school and primary-school students moved out of the 1935 Granbury Elementary building.

During the period of significance, 1935 to 1962, teachers like Nettie Baccus instructed Granbury's pupils. Mrs. Baccus taught Hood County students for forty-four years, beginning her career in 1919 in Fairview School north of Granbury.³² For many years, Mrs. Baccus taught first-grade at Granbury Elementary while also serving as the school's principal. After elementary students moved to the new school in 1962, Mrs. Baccus retired. In 1987, the school district named a new school north of Granbury Nettie Baccus Elementary School in her honor.

Hundreds of students learned to read and write in Granbury Elementary. During the 1948 to 1949 school year, Mrs. Baccus and six teachers taught classes for two hundred and sixty-three pupils. Mrs. Bessie Kinson instructed two grade levels, second and sixth. By the 1951 to 1952 school year, just before the school became a primary school, Mrs. Baccus and six teachers taught two hundred and sixty-seven students in grades one through five. That year, Mrs. Flora Tidwell taught a third- and fifth-grade combination class and Mrs. Virginia Armstrong taught a first- and second-grade combination class. The average class size that year of thirty-eight students far exceeds today's Texas elementary school class size limit of twenty-two students.

Despite crowded conditions some years, students who attended Granbury Elementary during the 1940s through 1962 have happy memories of their education. They remembered Mrs. Baccus as a formidable but fun principal who they could always hear walking the hallway, and they recalled Mrs. Kinson and Mrs. Tidwell as well as other teachers like Emma Morris, Callie Thomas, and Zollie Casstevens. Mrs. Baccus had school supplies at the ready for students to purchase in a small area in her office, and the school's hardwood floors smelled like the cleaner that janitors used on it. Students recalled the shared classes with one teacher, including in the late 1940s, when Mrs. Kinson taught both second grade and sixth grade in one classroom. While she instructed students in one grade, those in the other grade would study.

Students felt the excitement of ringing the large recess bell, which led them to a playground south of the school where they rode on a merry-go-round and see-saws, frolicked on a sliding board, swings, and monkey bars, lobbed balls at a basketball hoop, and drank out of concrete water fountain on the southeast corner of the school. Girls played with dolls under Chinaberry trees on the west side of the building and enjoyed hopscotch and jacks on the sidewalk in the front.

³⁰ "Crowd Attends Dedication New School Building," *The Granbury News*, September 27, 1935.

³¹ *The Pirate 1955*, Granbury High School, Granbury, Texas.

³² "Miss Baccus Dies," *Hood County News*, September 25, 1991, 1.

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Boys played with marbles and tops. A second-grade band performed and sang songs like “The Band Played On,” in front of the school.³³

After students moved into the new elementary school in 1962, Granbury Elementary housed high school home economics and business classes like typing and shorthand. The building was also used for storage of school district supplies. In 1973, Texas passed a law requiring school districts to offer kindergarten, so the 1935 elementary building reopened as Granbury’s first kindergarten class rooms. Three years later, the school board voted to remodel the interior of the 1935 elementary school so it could be used as administrative offices, a use it retained until 2017. Today, Granbury school district leases Granbury Elementary School to Forward Training Center, a local non-profit organization dedicated to educating and supporting adults.

Because Granbury Independent School District did not integrate its schools until the 1963-1964 academic year, which was after the new elementary school opened, no African American students attended classes in Granbury Elementary School during its period of significance from 1935 to 1962. Because Granbury Elementary was used for high school classes beginning in 1964 and for kindergarten classes from 1973 until 1976, African American students may have attended classes there beginning in 1964 until it became the district’s administration offices in 1976.

C.M. Love and Company Architects and Engineers

Little information is available on C.M. Love and Company Architects and Engineers. Love owned his own architectural firm known as C.M. Love and Company Architects and Engineers in Fort Worth for 38 years, specializing in design of school buildings in Texas. In 1935, the same year he designed Granbury Elementary, Love designed a school gymnasium in nearby Burleson. The Burleson Independent School District received a grant and loan from the Public Works Administration (PWA) to construct the gym, which was renovated in 1976, obscuring its windows and covering much of the exterior in metal siding (Figure 11). In 1940, Love designed a gymnasium for the school district in Mansfield, which received funding from the Work Projects Administration (WPA) (Figure 12). Both gymnasiums are rectangular buildings like Granbury Elementary, but are larger to accommodate basketball courts.

In 1950, Love designed a school for St. George Catholic Church parish in east Fort Worth (Figure 13). Like Granbury Elementary, it is a modest rectangular brick school, originally built for four classrooms and an assembly room. It is thirty-six feet wider than Granbury Elementary and the same depth. St. George Catholic School also features its name etched in concrete above the central entryway. But the school does not include the large windows and geometric architectural embellishments that distinguish Granbury Elementary. In 1939, Love designed a new library for nearby Weatherford College (Figure 14). This design is a more elaborate two-story brick building with cast stone architectural features and Moderne embellishments. Similar to Granbury Elementary, Love’s design for the library included a soldier course of brick along the top of the library and many large metal windows. Four years after Granbury Elementary was built, Love’s design for the library at Weatherford College also exhibits Modernistic design through the use of vertical piers along the front of the building and ornamentation above the entry. Granbury Elementary likely provided design inspiration for the library. The library is no longer extant. Love passed away in Fort Worth on January 18, 1959, at the age of 84.

Conclusion

Granbury Elementary School was the first elementary school for white students publicly funded and built by Granbury Independent School District after its creation in 1923. The opening of the school in 1935 also denoted a major

³³ These memories are among 294 comments posted on the Granbury Nostalgia Facebook Page in response to a post by the author on March 1, 2021, at 5:56 p.m., seeking memories about Granbury Elementary School.

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milestone for the district—educators moved away from teaching all students in one building and constructed a school to educate students in specific grade levels. Granbury Elementary School is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Education at the local level of significance because it symbolizes the prominence and progress of education within the community during the early 20th century. Designed by C.M. Love and Company Architects and Engineers, it embodies the distinctive characteristics of Modernistic architecture with Art Deco detailing. The period of significance spans from 1935 to 1962.

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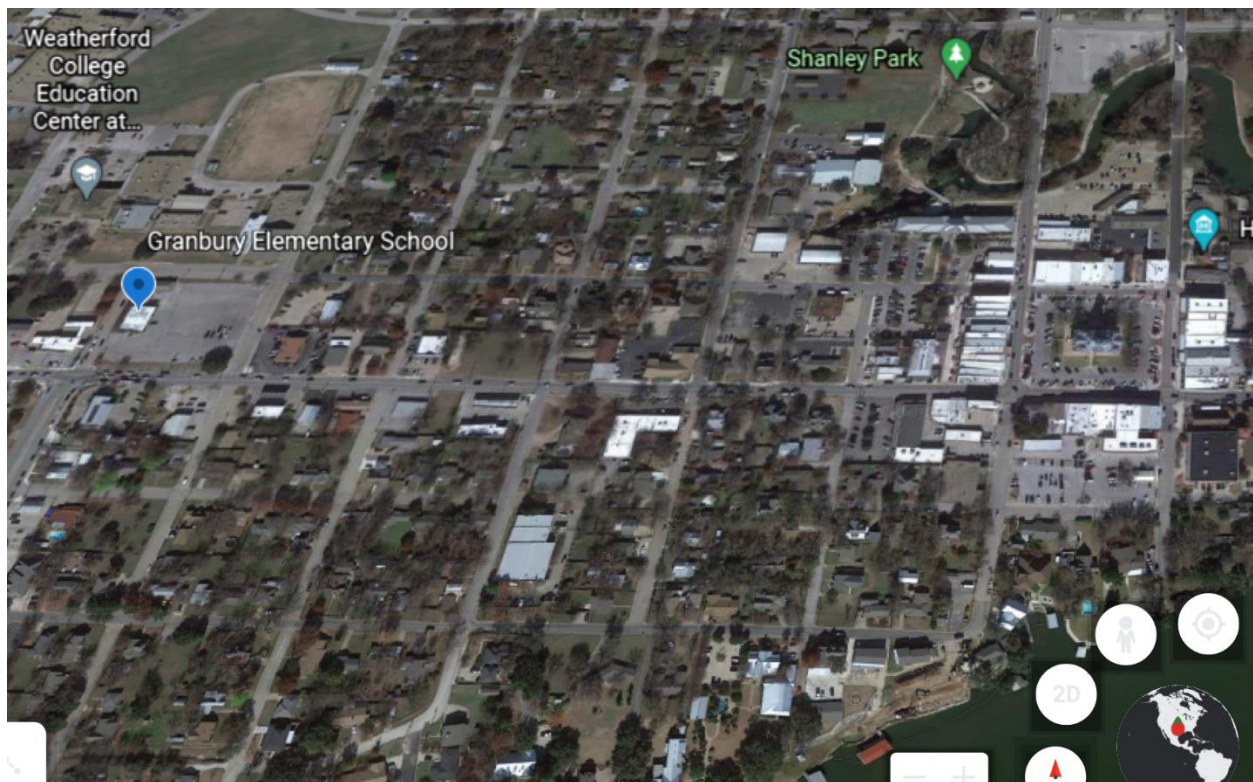
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MAPS

Map 1: Location of Hood County within Texas. Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hood_County,_Texas.

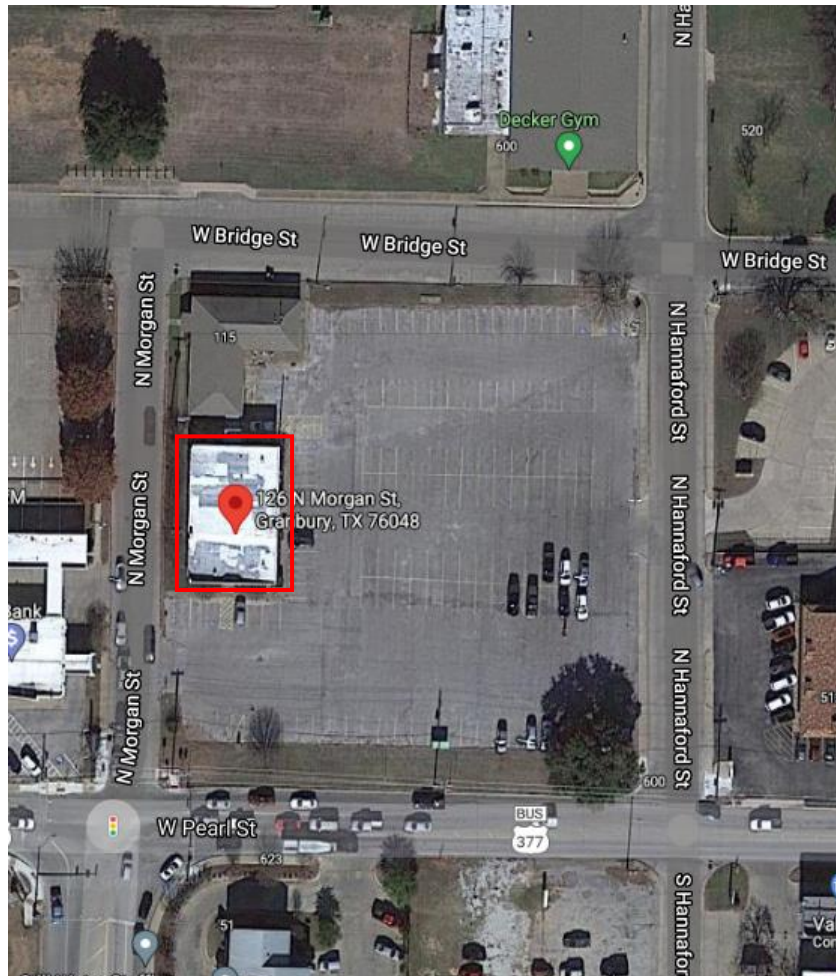


Map 2: Location of Granbury Elementary in Granbury, six blocks west of the Hood County Courthouse Square. Google Earth, accessed March 29, 2021.



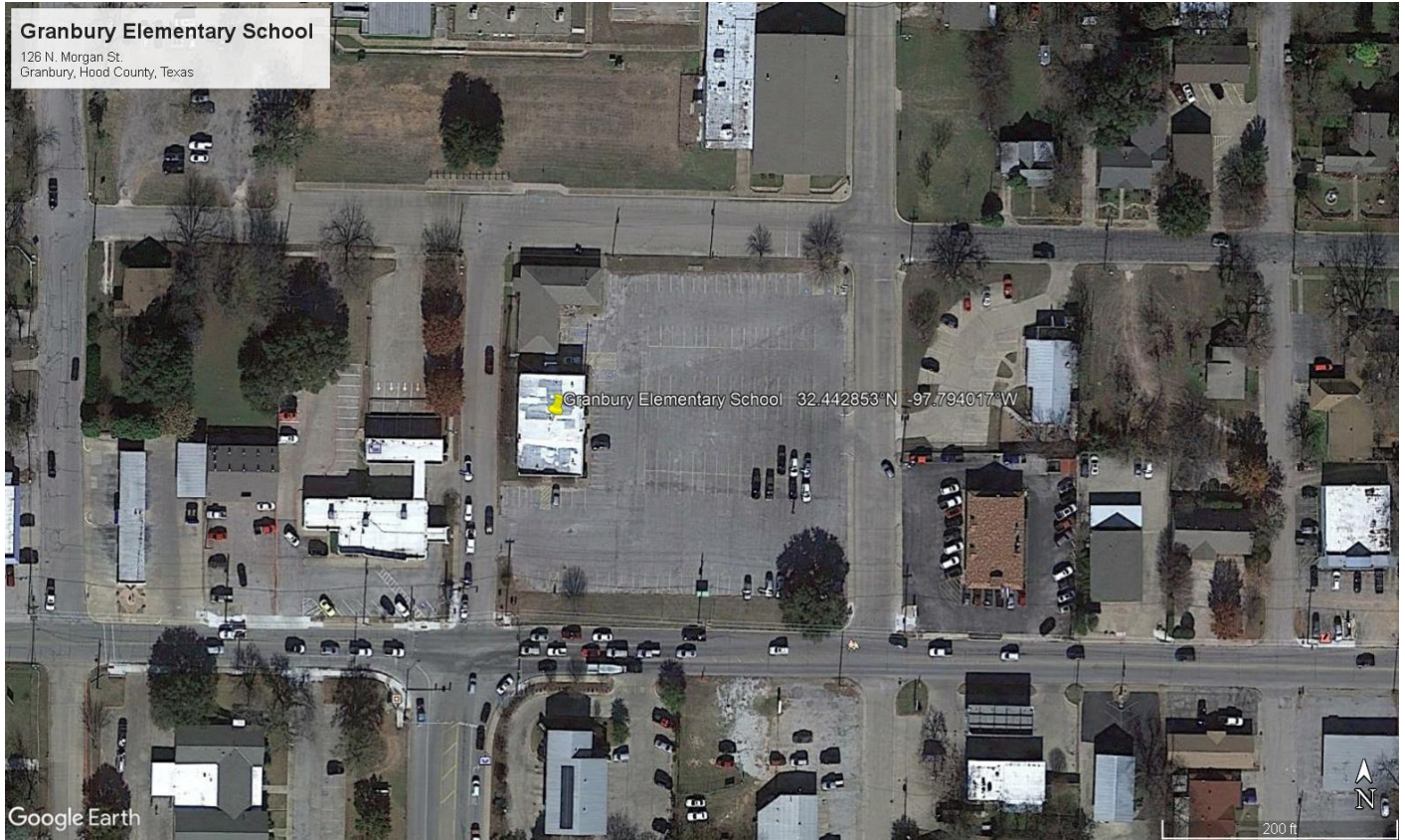
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Map 3: Map of Granbury Elementary School. Google Maps, accessed May 20, 2021. The nominated boundary, shown in red, includes approximately 0.147 acres on the western edge of the larger 3 acre legal parcel defined as MILAM CO – ABST 348 (Property ID R000043559), Granbury, Hood County, Texas (CAD Data accessed May 20, 2021). The boundary is drawn to include historic 1935 Granbury Elementary School and exclude the parking lot and cafeteria building to the north.



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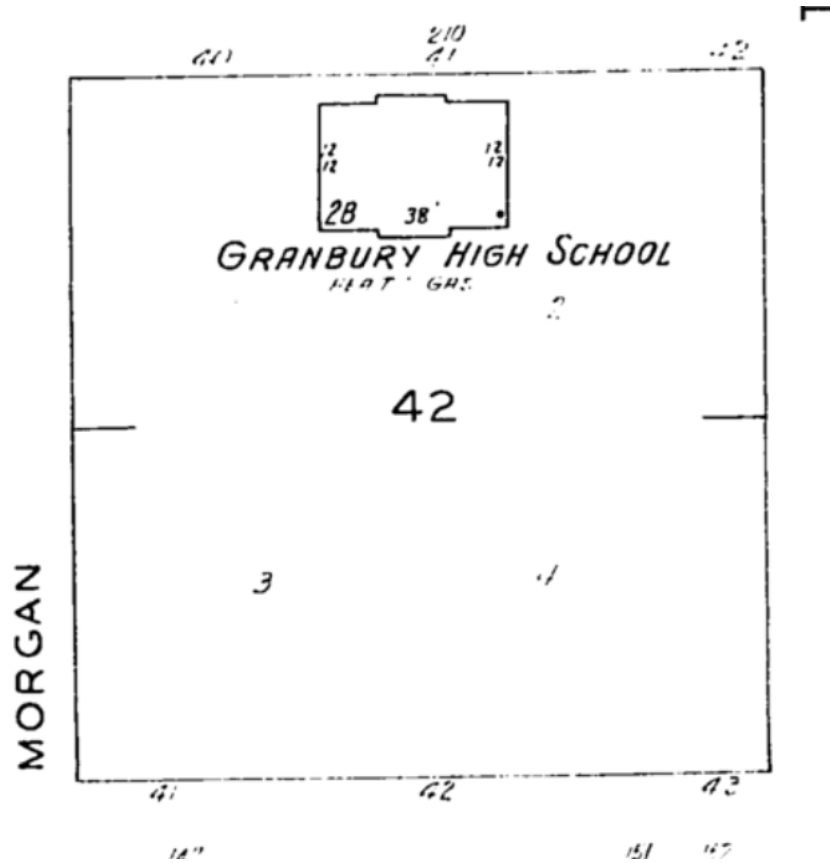
Map 4: Google Earth Map, accessed May 20, 2021.



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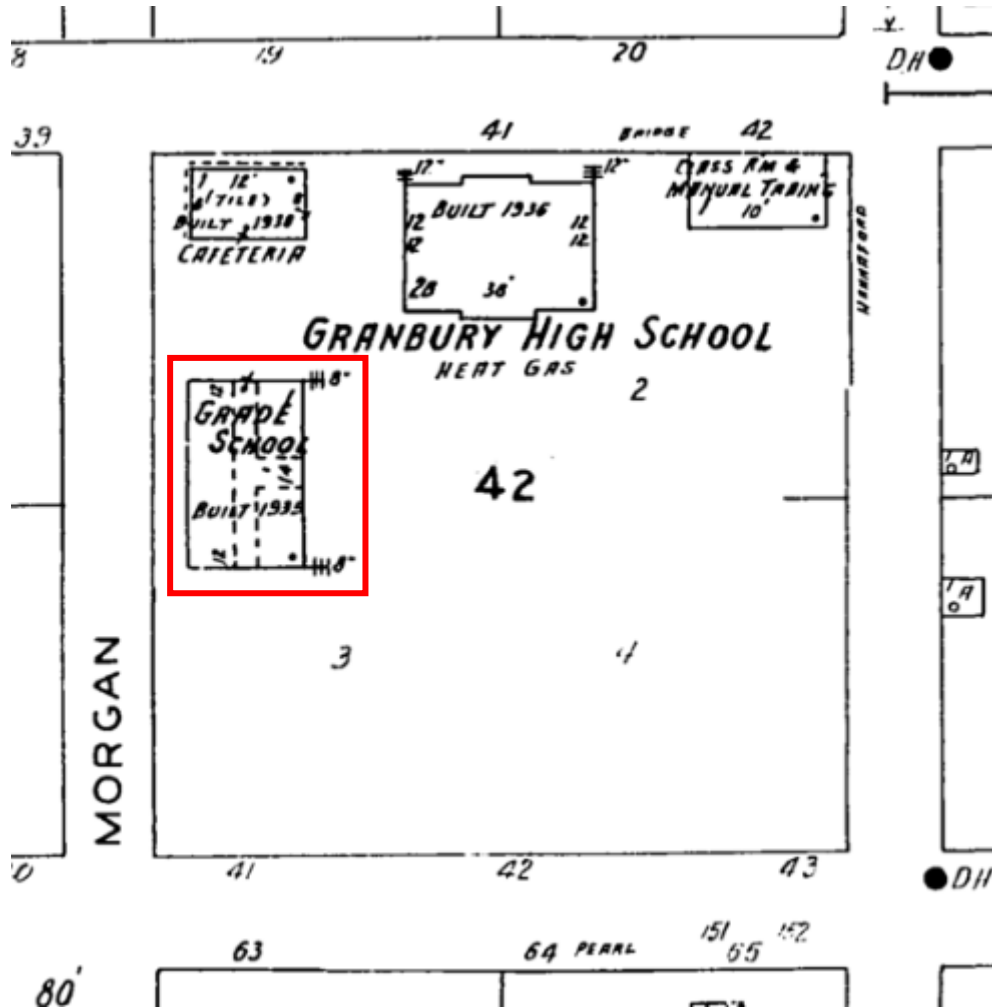
FIGURES

Figure 1: Granbury Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Feb. 1932, Sheet 3, showing Granbury school property prior to construction of 1935 Granbury Elementary School. Courtesy ProQuest Digital Sanborn Maps.



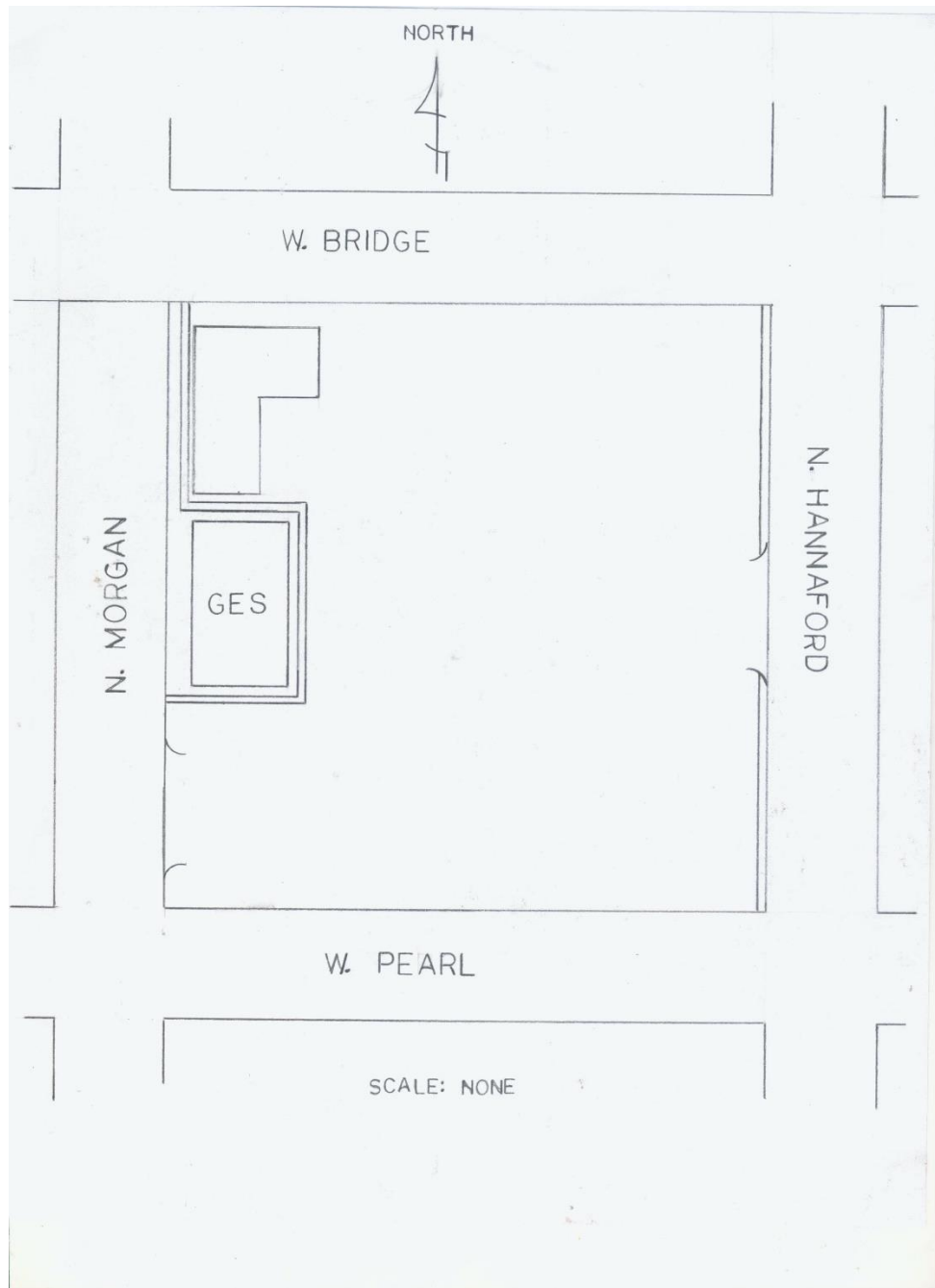
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Figure 2: 1945 update to 1932 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Granbury, Feb. 1932-Mar. 1945, Sheet 3, identifying Granbury Elementary as “Grade School.” Courtesy ProQuest Digital Sanborn Maps.



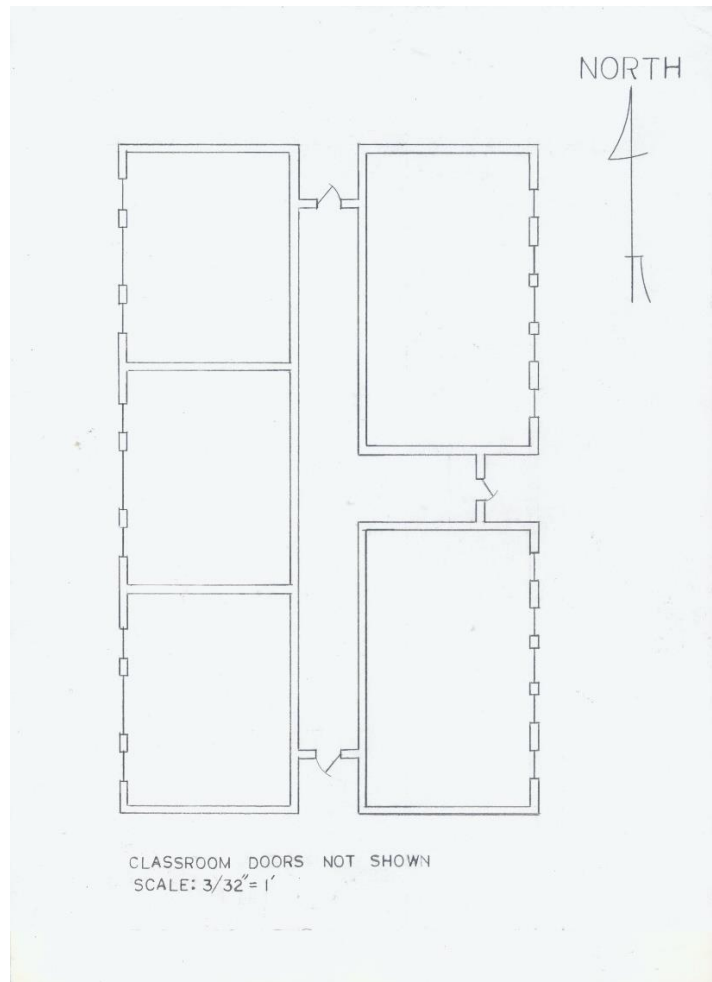
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Figure 3: Current site plan of Granbury Elementary and Block 42, City of Granbury. Drawn by Joseph K. Saltarelli.



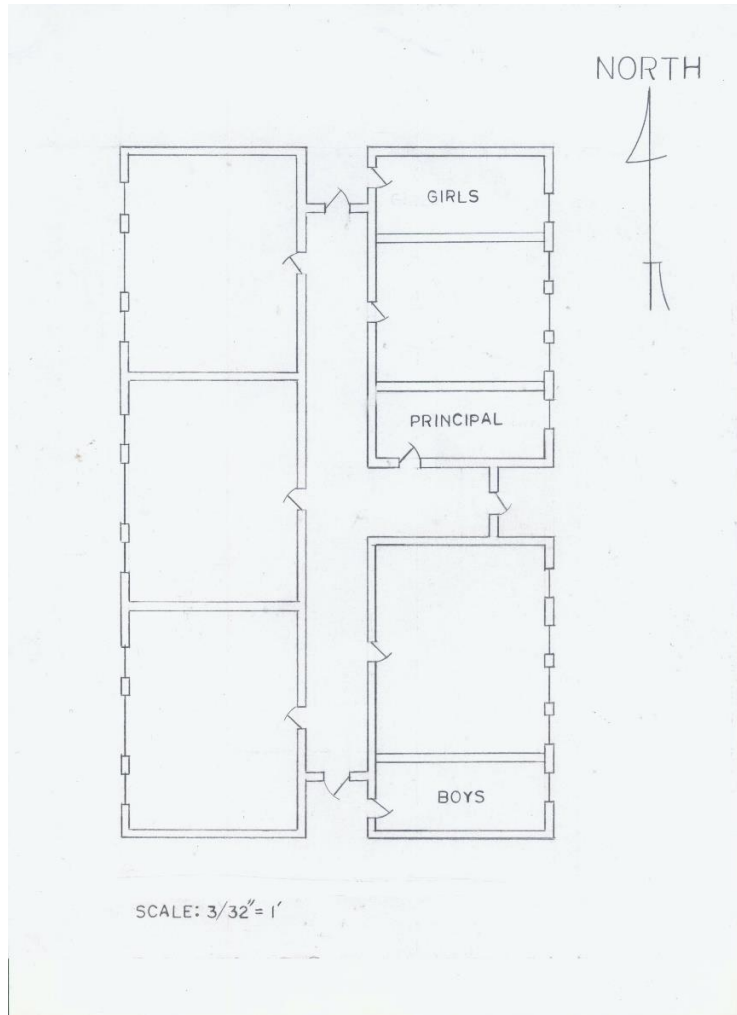
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Figure 4: Interior of Granbury Elementary as described in the *Granbury News* in 1935. Drawn by Joseph K. Saltarelli.



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Figure 5: Layout of Granbury Elementary School as remembered by students during the 1950s and 1960s. Drawn by Joseph K. Saltarelli.



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Figure 6: Current Layout of Granbury Elementary School. Courtesy Forward Training Center.

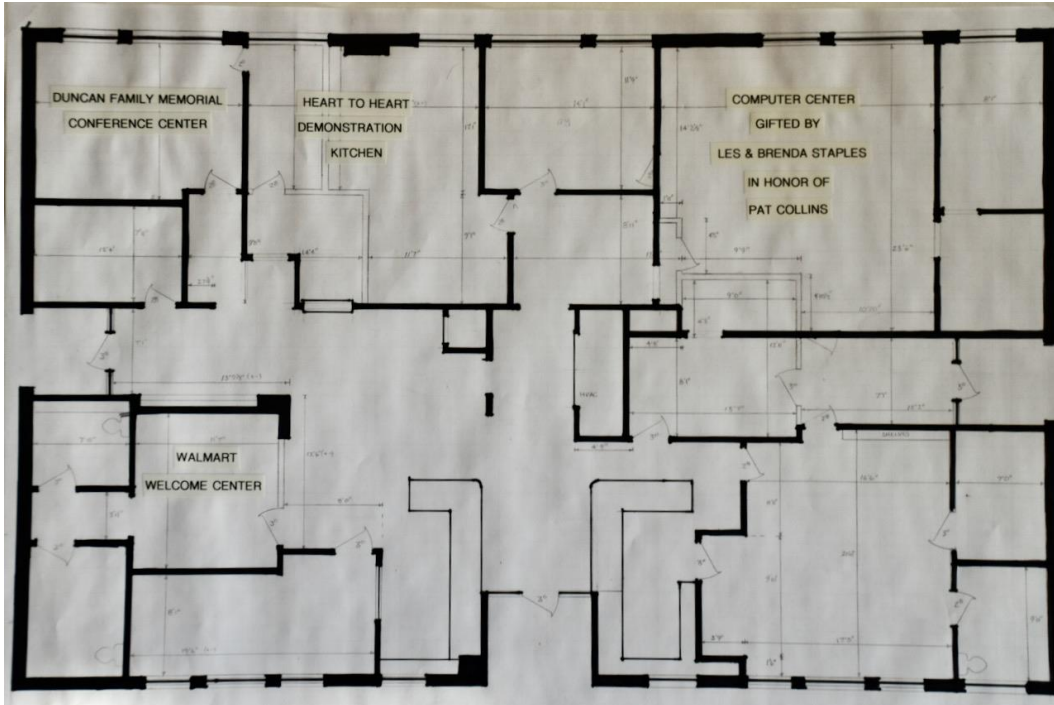


Figure 7: Granbury Public School, constructed 1891 on Block 42. This building is no longer standing. Courtesy Diane Lock.



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Figure 8: Granbury Public School, built 1917 on Block 42, copied from *The Peak*, Granbury's school yearbook published in 1918. This building is no longer standing.



Figure 9: Photo of Granbury Elementary School, 1945 to 1948. Courtesy Marsha Parkinson Gilbert.



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Figure 10: Photo of east façade and entryway of Granbury Elementary with a teacher and students from the 1949 *Pirate Yearbook*.



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Figure 11: Burlleson Gymnasium, designed by architect C.M. Love and constructed in 1935. From Living New Deal, <https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/burleson-gymnasium-tx/>.



Figure 12: Mansfield Gymnasium, known as “old rock gym,” built in 1940 and designed by C.M. Love. From Mansfield Historical Museum and Heritage Center, <https://www.mansfieldtexas.gov/1376/History-of-Education-in-Mansfield>.

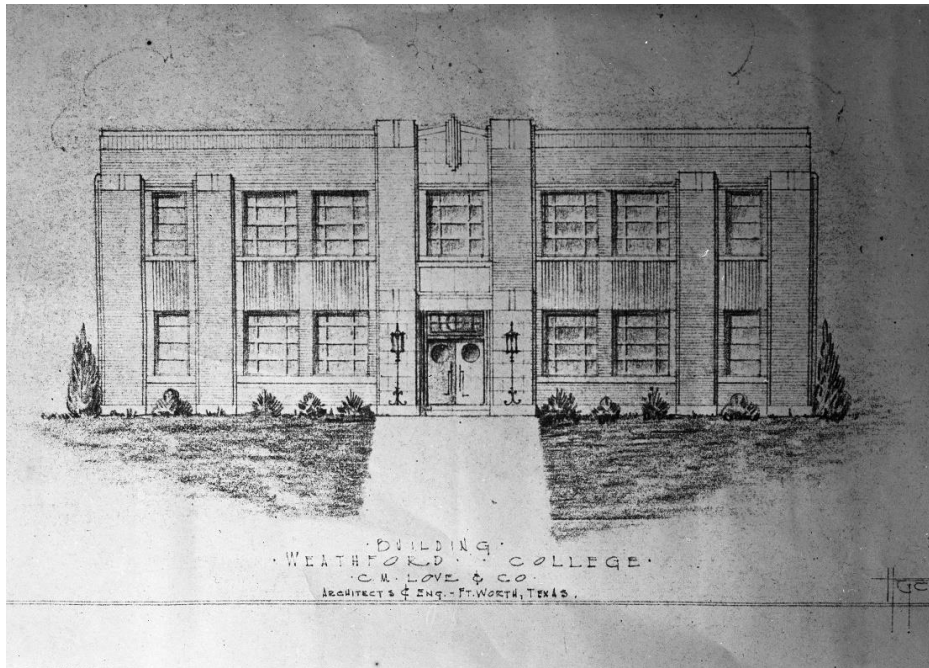


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Figure 13: St. George Catholic School, built in 1950 and designed by C.M. Love. From <https://stgeorgecatholicsschool.org>.



Figure 14: Fort Worth Architect C.M. Love's 1939 design for a library at Weatherford College. From University of Texas Arlington Libraries Digital Gallery, *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* collection.



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PHOTOS

Photo 1: East or front façade, camera facing west.



Photo 2: West elevation, camera facing east.



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Photo 3: North elevation oblique angle, camera facing southwest.



Photo 4: South elevation, camera facing north.



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Photo 5: East entryway, camera facing west.



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Photo 6: Inside east entryway looking up, camera facing west. May 15, 2018.



Photo 7: North end of the original interior north-south hallway, camera facing north.



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Photo 8: East entry with its short entrance hall, camera facing northeast.



Photo 9: South end of the original north-south hallway, camera facing south.



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Photo 10: Interior of chimney on west wall, camera facing west.

