

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JAN 30 1976
DATE ENTERED	APR 2 1976

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC *Confederate* Joseph E. Johnston Reunion Grounds, Camp No. 94  
United Confederate Veterans  
AND/OR COMMON

Jacks Creek Reunion Grounds

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER Approximately 4 mi. west of Mexia on F.M. 1633

CITY, TOWN

Mexia

VICINITY OF

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Texas

CODE

048

COUNTY

Limestone

CODE

293

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Joseph E. Johnston Camp #94

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Mexia

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Texas 76667

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Limestone County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN

Groesbeck

STATE

Texas

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Historic Sites Inventory

DATE

6-75

\_\_\_ FEDERAL  STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Texas Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Austin

STATE

Texas

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Comprised of seventy acres located at the juncture of Jacks Creek and the Navasota River west of Mexia, the Joseph E. Johnston Camp number 94 of the United Confederate Veterans has been a campground since the land was purchased in 1892. The reunion grounds consist of an architecturally significant octagonal pavilion, two turn of the century houses, stone and iron entry arches, a Civil War cannon, and ruins of a 1920's clubhouse, bathhouse, and gardens.

The dance pavilion, constructed by a Norwegian immigrant named Johansen in 1892, is octagonal in plan and capped by a cupola. An unusual central support system is used, comprised of four posts placed one on top of the other with each progressively higher post having a smaller diameter. Struts radiate from the central support, like branches from a tree, helping to support the fifty foot diameter span. Eight louvered openings provide ventilation to the pavilion. Concrete steps around the perimeter were added in 1965 at the same time wood bench seating was removed from between the exterior supports. An extension of the roof was also added around the perimeter to cover the added steps, but has obscured the view of the finely detailed fascia boards having a saw-tooth motif. Shingling is used as a siding on the cupola, and the whole pavilion is roofed with corrugated tin which has been painted red. A speaker's pavilion of later vintage was destroyed in the 1950's.

Two houses, both built ca. 1900, are situated on the grounds but are of little architectural merit. The Marion Adams house, a simple vernacular adaptation of the Victorian style, is to be used as meeting house and is known as the "heritage house". Adams was a violin maker in Mexia where the house was originally sited before recently being moved to the reunion grounds. The Sally Metcalf house is a summer house which was originally used as lodging for the Metcalf family during the annual encampments and visits to the grounds. Presently the house is used as the home of the quartermaster and has been greatly altered to suit this function.

Of the two original entries, only the one on Robert E. Lee Drive has the ca. 1892 entry arches intact. Six square iron pillars support four round arches topped by an iron filigree of Victorian motif. Recent restoration work to the entries consists of placing a stone veneer around the pillars, and reinforcing the iron arches with a steel mesh with the name of the reunion grounds attached. Located at the end of Lee Drive opposite from the entry arches is the Val Verde cannon, which was captured by Confederate forces near Val Verde, New Mexico early in the Civil War.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JAN 30 1976
DATE ENTERED APR 2 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

In the 1920's, when the oil boom hit Mexia, the park saw increased usage, and the facilities were expanded. Jacks Creek was dammed at the spring near the Navasota River to make a swimming pool, and a large bathhouse was built on the banks of the Navasota. Ruins of the steps leading from the edge of the water to the bathhouse are all that remain. A concrete archway with steps leading down to the spring marks the entry to the swimming area, and two steel trussed foot bridges have replaced the ca. 1920's swinging bridges across the creek. Pathways and gardens which once graced the banks of the creek and river are overgrown and unattended, showing little hint of their former grandeur. Only foundations can be seen of the once popular Poco clubhouse which entertained many of the people coming to Mexia during the oil boom days.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 31 1976
DATE ENTERED	APR 2 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

Physical Description --Joseph E. Johnston Confederate Reunion Grounds,  
Camp no. 94, Texas.

The boundary of the Confederate Reunion Grounds follows exactly the property lines of the present Joseph E. Johnston, Camp No. 94. All of the present-day site was encompassed in the original 1892 purchase. A site map is included in the submission which will help clarify the following boundary description.

The site is bound on the southwest by F.M. Road 1633, and on the northwest by a fence-line extending at a right angle from the farm road to the Navasota River. The northeast boundary consists of the south bank of the river bend past its conjunction with Jack's Creek, extending on a fence-line southwest from the river to the creek, and then following the creek to its juncture with a gravel topped road. The southeast boundary follows this road to its meeting with Robert E. Lee Drive, except for a slight variance where the newer road does not follow a sharp bend in the original property line. From Lee Drive the property line extends southwest to F.M. 1633 which is the southwest boundary of the site.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Fraternal organi- zations
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1892

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Joseph E. Johnston Reunion Grounds, Camp number 94, is a park established near Mexia in the late 19th century to honor local Confederate veterans, and it continued to hold encampments through the 1930's. Restored as a park in 1965, the grounds serve as a reminder of the period when the South's regional consciousness was reinforced by Civil War commemoration. In addition, the Joseph E. Johnston Camp was unique in that it sold lots to individual owners and laid out a street plan.

The Joseph E. Johnston Reunion Grounds was one of several camps established in the South after Reconstruction to honor Confederate veterans. In 1889, the Limestone County organization began holding the popular annual encampments where the program included political speeches, memorial activities and concerts. By 1892, a 70-acre site was purchased at the junction of Jacks Creek and the Navasota River, approximately 4 miles west of Mexia.

During the week of the full moon each August, members came to the encampments for reunions, living in tents or summer houses. Entertainment ranged from dancing and listening to orations at the pavilions, to swimming and fishing in Jacks Creek or the Navasota River. Special trains were run for years from Ft. Worth, Dallas, and Houston to handle the families and friends of the Limestone County veterans visiting the reunion at Jacks Creek.

When the reunion grounds were first established, lots were sold to shareholders and many summer houses were built for the families to live in during the encampments. One of these houses, the Sally Metcalf house built around 1900, remains and is presently used for the quarter-masters or groundskeepers house. Some of the roads, which wind throughout the grounds, remain as laid out by the first board of directors, such as the entrance to the park from the east named Robert E. Lee Avenue, and the entrance from the west, Stonewall Jackson Drive. A large octagonal gazebo of unusual design, known as the dance pavilion, was built in 1893 and still stands today. Another early pavilion used mainly for orations and programs was destroyed. The Val Verde cannon captured by Confederate forces in the early part of the Civil War

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JAN 30 1976
DATE ENTERED APR 2 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

around Val Verde, New Mexico, and used throughout the war, most successfully at the Battle of Mansfield, Louisiana, is now located at the end of Robert E. Lee Avenue. Dawn and dusk salutes by the cannon were traditionally fired during the encampment.

After the Mexia oil boom began in 1920, Colonel A. E. Humphreys, a local leader in petroleum discovery, built club facilities on the grounds and promoted use of the park. Among the facilities built at this time were a dam on Jacks Creek with a bathhouse and swinging bridges, a club house, and landscaped gardens with walkways. The clubhouse, called the Poco Club, was built for the use of Humphreys' employees and guests at the cost of \$100,000 but only foundations remain.

In peak years as many as 5,000 people assembled on the grounds for the annual encampment, and participation was high until the early 1940's when light attendance caused the reunion to be discontinued. Interest in the reunion grounds was revived in 1965 when a permanent state charter was obtained. An active organization has since guided the growth and expansion of these grounds as an educational and amusement center for the people of Limestone County. A title III educational grant was made in 1966 by H.E.W. to finance an innovative outdoor historical symphonic drama performed on the grounds that same year. The board of directors of the camp are currently seeking another federal grant that would create a fine arts camp in association with the Southern Methodist University Art Department.

S

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Chatham, Tom, Interview with Mike Yancey, June, 1975, Mexia, Tx.  
 Moss, John, Mexia Daily News, Monday, July 26, 1965.  
The Texas Counties--Limestone, Leon, and Freestone, News Publishing Co.,  
 Inc., Mexia, Tx 1968.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 70

UTM REFERENCES

A | 14 | 731810 | 35102580 |  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B | 14 | 731810 | 3501730 |  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C | 14 | 731030 | 3501730 |

D | 14 | 731030 | 3502580 |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Joe R. Williams, Project Director  
 Michael Yancey, Research Associate

DATE 1-27-76

ORGANIZATION Texas Historical Commission

DATE

STREET & NUMBER P. O. Box 12276

TELEPHONE 475-3094

CITY OR TOWN Austin, Tx

STATE 78711

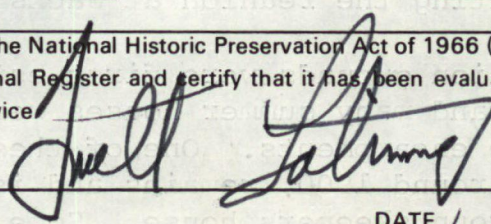
# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL      STATE      LOCAL XX

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



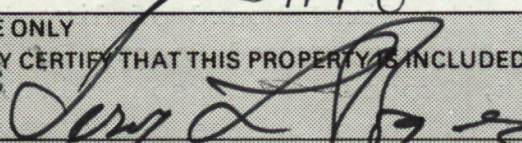
TITLE SHPO

DATE 1-28-76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Active



DATE 4/2/90

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: Robert B. Ketting  
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 4-1-76

Active

Confederate

76002092

Property Joseph E. Johnston Reunion Grounds, Camp No. 94  
United Confederate Veterans

Limestone

State Texas Working Number 130.76.2472

TECHNICAL

CONTROL

Photos 5  
Maps 1, sketch

OK pl  
2, 6, 76

Ok, except for one rather awkward turn in the boundaries that is not explained. Ray will call about this.

HISTORIAN

Accept  
E. Smith  
3-17-76

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

Good nomination. Don't see any real concern for historic archaeological potential for this ~~type~~ one, though

ARCHEOLOGIST

accept  
Pilsbry

Mike Yancy will send boundary desc.

OTHER

Accept  
W. R. Luce  
3/17/76

HAER

Inventory \_\_\_\_\_  
Review \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

Accept  
Cole  
3-31-76

BRANCH CHIEF

Accept  
Hump  
3.21-76

KEEPER

Accept  
Ketting (for Murtagh)  
4-1-76

National Register Write-up \_\_\_\_\_ Send-back \_\_\_\_\_  
Federal Register Entry 5-4-76 Re-submit \_\_\_\_\_

Entered APR 2 1976

INT:2106-74



PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NPS Number 4/2/76

Title: Joseph E. Johnston Confederate  
Reunion Grounds

Limestone County, Texas

Loc. South elevation

Pavilion

\_\_\_\_\_

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JAN 30 1976

DATE ENTERED APR 2 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Joseph E. Johnston Confederate Reunion Grounds

AND/OR COMMON

Jacks Creek Reunion Grounds

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN

Mexia

VICINITY OF

STATE

Texas

COUNTY

Limestone

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT Alex Nelson

DATE OF PHOTO 6-75

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Texas Historical Commission

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

South Elevation Pavilion

PHOTO NO.

1 of 5



PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NPS Number 4/2/76  
Title: Joseph E. Johnston Confederate  
Reunion Grounds

Limestone County, Texas  
Loc. Pavilion Entrance, detail  
of center support system  
and cupola



PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NPS Number 4/2/76  
 Title: Joseph E. Johnston Confederate  
Reunion Grounds  
 Loc. Limestone County, Texas  
Entry arches on Lee  
Drive



PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NPS Number 4/2/76  
 Title: Joseph B. Johnston Confederate  
Reunion Grounds  
Limestone County, Texas  
 Loc. Jacks Creek at dam,  
viewing steps and foundations  
of bathhouse  
 4 of 5



PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NPS Number 4/2/76  
Title: Joseph S. Johnston Confederate  
Reunion Grounds  
Limestone County, Texas  
Loc. Val Verde Cannon

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

JAN 30 1976

DATE ENTERED

APR 2 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Joseph E. Johnston Confederate Renunion Grounds

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

COUNTY

STATE

Approx. 4 mi. w. of Mexia on F.M. 1633 Limestone Texas

**3 MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE

USGS

SCALE

1:24000

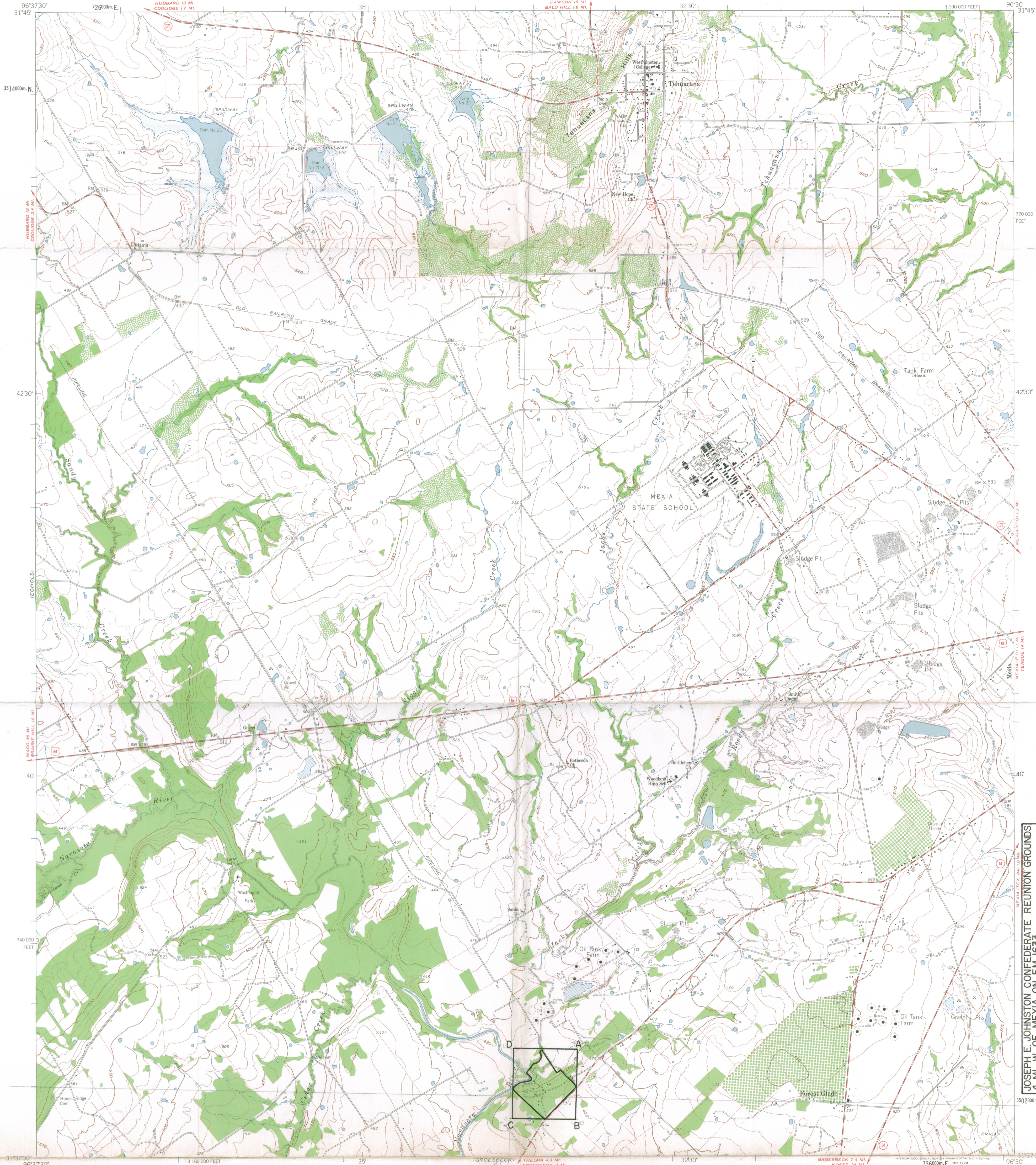
DATE

1957

**4 REQUIREMENTS**

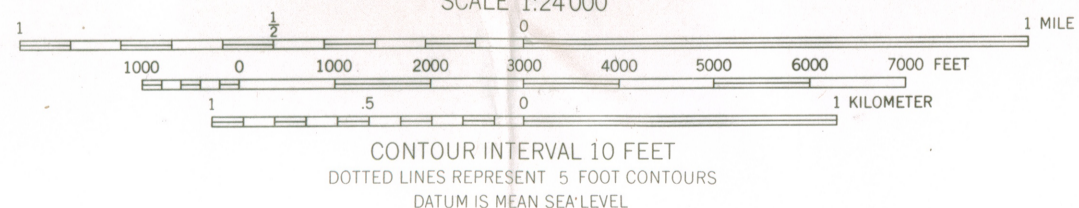
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES Note Site Map
2. NORTH ARROW

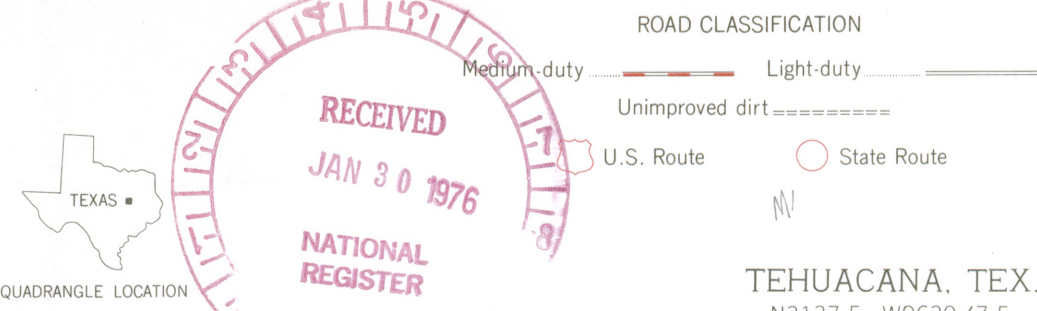


Maped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods  
Aerial photographs taken 1958. Field check 1960  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system,  
central zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 14, shown in blue  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines  
where generally visible on aerial photographs  
This information is unchecked  
Areas covered by dashed light-blue pattern are subject  
to controlled inundation

TRILE NORTH  
MAGNETIC NORTH  
APPROXIMATE MEAN  
DECLINATION, 1960



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER 25, COLORADO OR WASHINGTON 25, D. C.  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



3196 -314

TEHUACANA, TEX.  
N3137.5-W9630/7.5

1960

JOHNSTON CONFEDERATE REUNION GROUNDS  
4 MI. W. OF MEXIA ON F.M. 1633  
UTM REFERENCE:  
A 14/ 73180/ 3502580 , B 14/ 73180/ 3501730  
C 14/ 731030/ 3501730 , D 14/ 731030/ 3502580

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JAN 30 1976

DATE ENTERED APR 2 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Joseph E. Johnston Confederate Reunion Grounds

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN \_\_\_\_\_ VICINITY OF \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_  
Approx. 4 mi. w. of Mexia on F.M. 1633 Limestone Texas

**3 MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE Mike Yaneey, Draftsman

SCALE none DATE 1-6-76

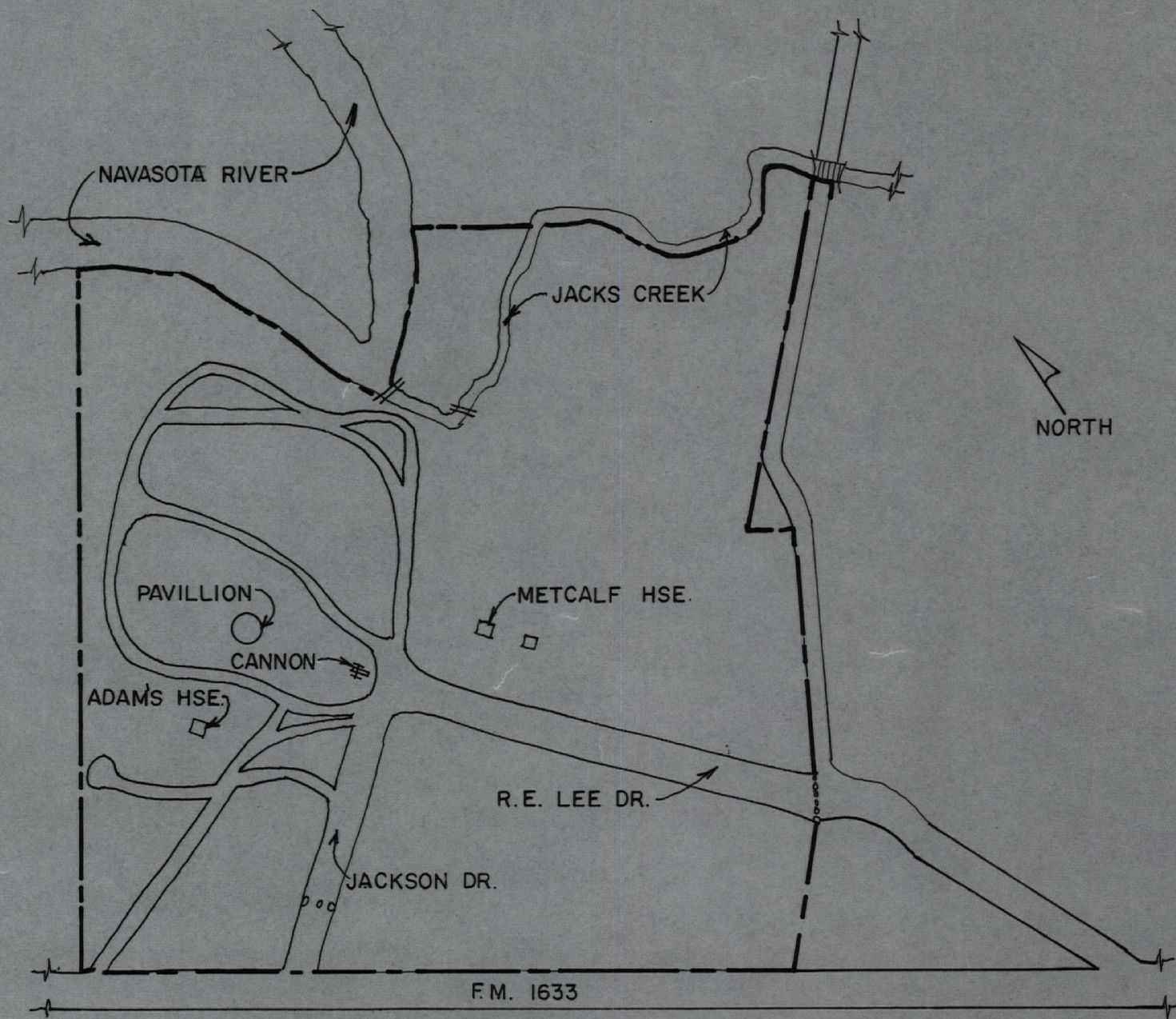
**4 REQUIREMENTS**

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES

# CONFEDERATE REUNION GROUNDS

NO SCALE



R. W. OLIVER, JR.  
Mayor

MRS. MARTHA TILLEY  
City Secretary

# CITY OF GROESBECK

GROESBECK, TEXAS 76642

March 11, 1976

~~Mr. Horace J. Sheely, Jr.  
Chief, Historic Sites Survey  
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Washington, D. C. 20240~~

Dear Mr. Sheely:

Please accept my apologies for the delay in answering your request for a summary of the history of the Joseph E. Johnston Camp. The following brief summary is based largely on the minutes of the Camp meetings and material on file at the Gibbs Library, Mexia, Texas.

In Limestone County, Texas, a beautiful grove of large native oak and pecan trees grows at the confluence of the Navasota River and Jack's Creek. A nearby spring of fresh water flows into the Creek. This is true today as it was in 1889.

In this sylvan setting, 403 veterans of the War Between the States assembled for their first camp meeting July 31st, August 1st and 2nd, 1889. They elected officers, adopted a constitution and named their association "Limestone County Camp of Confederate Veterans."

At the next meeting on July 31, 1890, a resolution was passed authorizing the commander to charter the Camp in the general organization of United Confederate Veterans. The 1912 edition of "Organization of Camps in the United Confederate Veterans" showed 1,772 current camps with this Camp listed as No. 94.

In 1890, a cannon, one of the Camp's proudest possessions, was given to the Camp. This cannon has the following history:

On April 21, 1862, after the defeat of the Union forces at the Battle of Val Verde or Ft. Craig, New Mexico, Captain Joseph D. Sayers, who later became governor of Texas, was put in command of a new battery made up of the captured ordinance.

Among these cannon were two which would become known as the Val Verde cannon. After service at the Battle of Mansfield, Louisiana, and the close of the War, these two cannon were taken to Fairfield, Texas. One of them was christened "Old Val Verde" and was taken to the Confederate Camp Grounds in Limestone County in 1890. It was fired at dawn and dusk in honor of Confederate veterans at the annual meetings until 1940. This cannon is presently mounted on an elevated platform near the center of the grounds.

At the July 24, 1891 meeting the name of the association was changed to "The Joseph E. Johnston Veterans Association." This was done in honor of General Joseph E. Johnston, C. S. A.

During this same encampment, July 1891, the Grounds Committee reported that 20 acres of the camp grounds could be bought for \$200.00. Another committee was appointed to purchase this land and the first 20 acres were purchased June 16, 1892. Other tracts were purchased as follows:

2nd	Spring	12-31-95
3rd	7 acres	03-01-97
4th	10 acres	11-08-01
5th	26.47 acres	01-21-03
6th	30 acres	10-10-05
7th	3 acres	02-11-11

These purchases total 96.47 acres. A survey in 1966 indicated that the occupied area now totals only 77 acres. Vagueness of the field notes accompanying the deeds possibly accounts for this discrepancy since we have no records of any of the Camp's land ever having been sold.

In 1900, a large octagonal pavilion used for entertainment and large gatherings was constructed near the center of the grounds. The structure was designed and built by a Norwegian carpenter named Jim Johansen. This unique pavilion is still standing and is in constant use by family groups. Also, in that same year a smaller speaker's pavilion was constructed in the same style. This structure was later torn down due to severe wind damage.

The Camp received its first charter as an incorporated group from the State of Texas in 1921.

Confederate veterans and their families continued to meet

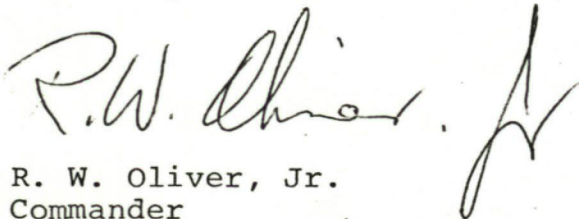
Page 3

annually until 1940. Due to the age of the few surviving veterans, no meetings were held after that date nor was the charter renewed until 1965 when a group of interested descendants of the founders made application to the State of Texas and received a permanent charter. Since 1965 the dedicated directors of the Camp have removed several dwellings which had been constructed in violation of the provisions of the lapsed charter. The grounds have been cleared and are being maintained as a verdant, quiet oasis used by area residents and for many, many family reunions which bring together scattered families from all over the United States.

Previously, photographs have been mailed to Dr. Ernest A. Connally and I will ask him to transmit them to you.

Should more detailed information be needed, I will be glad to furnish anything you desire.

Sincerely,



R. W. Oliver, Jr.  
Commander

Joseph E. Johnston Camp No. 94, C. S. A.

cc. Mr. Jerry Rogers, Acting Director, Architectural & Historical Preservation, Department of the Interior

Mr. Cornelius W. Heine, Chief, Historical & Architectural Surveys Division, National Park Service, Department of the Interior

✓ Mr. William J. Murtagh, Keeper of Register, National Park Service, Department of the Interior

Dr. Ernest Allen Connally

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE                    **TEXAS**

Date Entered        **APR 2 1976**

Name

Location

Live Oak Creek Archeological District

Sheffield vicinity  
Crockett, Pecos, Tarrell counties

L Joseph E. Johnston Confederate  
Reunion Grounds

Mexia vicinity  
Limestone County

Also Notified

Hon. John G. Tower  
Hon. Lloyd L. Bentsen  
Hon. Robert C. Krueger  
Hon. Olin E. Teague

Regional Director, Southwest Region

PR

Mott

4/8/76

State Historic Preservation Officer  
Mr. Truett Latimer  
Executive Director, Texas State  
Historical Survey Committee  
P. O. Box 12276, Capitol Station  
Austin, Texas 78711

*Johnston  
Co TX*

*Retting  
for Herrington  
4-5-76*

*Latimer  
4/5/76  
Reg n 4/4/76*

H34-PR

APR 8 1976

Mr. Thomas Beall Chatham, Jr.  
301 East Carthage Street  
Mexico, Texas 76667

Dear Mr. Chatham:

It is my pleasure to inform you that the Joseph E. Johnston Confederate Reunion Grounds were entered in the National Register on April 2, 1976. In evaluating the nomination submitted by Truett Latimer, the Texas State Historic Preservation Officer, the National Register staff concurred that the Reunion Grounds significantly recall the period when the South's regional consciousness was reinforced by Civil War commemoration.

As you are aware, listing in the National Register is Federal recognition that a property possesses historic values and is worthy of preservation. Leaflets describing the National Register and grants-in-aid programs are enclosed.

Sincerely yours,

Ernest Allen Connally

Ernest Allen Connally  
Associate Director,  
Professional Services

**Enclosures**

cc: Mr. Truett Latimer  
Executive Director  
Texas Historical Commission  
P.O. Box 12276, Capitol Station  
Austin, Texas 78711

bcc: Regional Director, Southwest Region  
Director's Reading File  
P PH

PR

FNP:CA Herrington:lw 4/2/76

BASIC FILE RETAINED IN PR

Retting  
for Herrington  
4-5-76

Watt  
4/5/76  
By [signature]

H34-PR

APR 8 1976

Mr. Rufus W. Oliver, Jr.  
Commander  
Joseph E. Johnston Camp No. 94 CSA  
Groesbeck, Texas 76642

Dear Mr. Oliver:

It is my pleasure to inform you that the Joseph E. Johnston Confederate Reunion Grounds were entered in the National Register on April 2, 1976. In evaluating the nomination submitted by Truett Latimer, the Texas State Historic Preservation Officer, the National Register staff concurred that the Reunion Grounds significantly recall the period when the South's regional consciousness was reinforced by Civil War commemoration.

As you are aware, listing in the National Register is Federal recognition that a property possesses historic values and is worthy of preservation. Leaflets describing the National Register and grants-in-aid programs are enclosed.

Sincerely yours,

Ernest Allen Connally

Ernest Allen Connally  
Associate Director,  
Professional Services

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Truett Latimer  
Executive Director  
Texas Historical Commission  
P.O. Box 12276, Capitol Station  
Austin, Texas 78711

bcc: Regional Director, Southwest Region  
Director's Reading File  
P PH  
PR

FNP:CA Herrington:lw 4/2/76

✓ BASIC FILE RETAINED IN PR

# NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET

Ethnic

1 NAME as it appears on federal register: ① Johnston, Joseph E. Confederate Reunion Grounds ② OTHER NAMES: Jacks Creek Reunion Grounds ✓ (csec.) ③ date of entry: 4-2-76 ✓ ④ county code: 293

⑤ LOCATION street & number city / town vicinity of state county ⑥ NPS REGION:  
 4 mi. W of Mexia on F.M. 1633 ✓ Mexia ✓ TX ✓ limestone ✓ SW

⑦ OWNER  PRIVATE  STATE  MUNICIPAL  COUNTY  MULTIPLE  FEDERAL (agency name) ⑧ ADMINISTRATOR:

⑨ EXISTING SURVEYS  HABS  HAER  NHL ⑩ FUNDED?  YES  NO ⑪ CONGRESS. DISTRICT ⑫ SOURCE of NOMINATION  STATE  FEDERAL if state, who prepared form? TX H.C. ⑬ ACREAGE 70 LOCAL  PRIVATE ORGANIZATION

⑭ WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT?  YES, NAME  NO ⑮ WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK?  YES, NAME  NO ⑯ CONDITION  deteriorated  altered  original site  excellent  ruins  unaltered  moved  good  unexposed  reconstructed  unknown  fair  unexcavated  excavated ⑰ FEATURES: INTERIOR  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1  NOT INTACT-0  UNKNOWN-4  NOT APPLICABLE-7 EXTERIOR  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-2  NOT INTACT-0  UNKNOWN-5  NOT APPLICABLE-8 ENVIRONS  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-3  NOT INTACT-0  UNKNOWN-6  NOT APPLICABLE-9

⑱ ACCESS  YES - Restricted  YES - Unrestricted  No Access  Unknown ⑲ ADAPTIVE USE  YES  NO ⑳ SAVED?  YES  NO IS PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT?  YES  NO

㉑ AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:  ARCHEOLOGY - prehistoric-2  ARCHEOLOGY - historic-1  AGRICULTURE-3  ARCHITECTURE-4  ART-5  ENGINEERING-11  ENTERTAINMENT-26  EXPLORATION-12  HEALTH-27  INDUSTRY-13  INVENTION-14  LANDSCAPE ARCH.-15  LAW-16  LITERATURE-17  MILITARY-18  MUSIC-19  PHILOSOPHY-20  POLITICS / GOVT.-21  RELIGION-22  SCIENCE-23  SOCIAL / HUMANITARIAN-24  SOCIAL / CULTURAL-30  TRANSPORTATION-25  RECREATION-28  SETTLEMENT-29  URBAN PLANNING-31  OTHER (SPECIFY) ㉒ CLAIMS: explain 'first'  'oldest'  'only'

㉓ functions WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: Campground CURRENTLY: Park ㉔ dates of initial construction: 1892 - 1930s ✓ major alterations: historic events: ㉕ ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION Norwegian

㉖ architectural style(s): ㉗ architect: ㉘ master builder: ㉙ engineer:

㉚ landscape architect / garden designer: ㉛ interior decorator: ㉜ artist: ㉝ artisan: ㉞ builder / contractor: Johansen - pavilion (no 1st name)

㉟ NAMES give role & date PERSONAL: EVENTS: INSTITUTIONAL:

㊱ NATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP  
 Campground contains two turn-of-the-century houses, a canon, ruins of 1920s clubhouse, bathhouse, and gardens; notable are the iron filigree entrance arches supported by square iron pillars, and the central <sup>roof</sup> support system of the octagonal dance pavilion, a telescoping pole ~~composed~~ of four successively smaller posts with struts radiating from each end. Annual reunion grounds for Confederate veterans (1892--1930s), a reflection of regional consciousness reinforced by commemoration of the Civil War.

# NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET

Ethnic

① NAME as it appears on federal register: **Johnston, Joseph E. Confederate Reunion Grounds** ② OTHER NAMES: **Jacks Creek Reunion Grounds** ③ date of entry: **4-2-76** ④ county code: **293**

⑤ LOCATION street & number: **4 mi. W of Mexia on F.M. 1633** city / town: **Mexia** vicinity of: **Mexia** state: **TX** county: **limestone** ⑥ NPS REGION: **SW**

⑦ OWNER  PRIVATE  STATE  MUNICIPAL  COUNTY  MULTIPLE  FEDERAL (agency name) ⑧ ADMINISTRATOR:

⑨ EXISTING SURVEYS  HABS  HAER  NHL ⑩ FUNDED?  YES  NO ⑪ CONGRESS. DISTRICT ⑫ SOURCE of NOMINATION  STATE  FEDERAL if state, who prepared form? **TX H.C.**

⑬ WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT?  YES, NAME ⑭ WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK?  YES, NAME ⑮ ACREAGE: **70** ⑯ LOCAL  PRIVATE ORGANIZATION

⑰ CONDITION  deteriorated  altered  original site  excellent  ruins  unaltered  moved  good  unexposed  reconstructed  unknown  fair  unexcavated  excavated

⑰ features: INTERIOR  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1  NOT INTACT-0  UNKNOWN-4  NOT APPLICABLE-7 EXTERIOR  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-2  NOT INTACT-0  UNKNOWN-5  NOT APPLICABLE-8 ENVIRONS  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-3  NOT INTACT-0  UNKNOWN-6  NOT APPLICABLE-9

⑱ ACCESS  YES - Restricted  YES - Unrestricted  No Access  Unknown ⑲ ADAPTIVE USE  YES  NO ⑳ SAVED?  YES  NO ㉑ IS PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT?  YES  NO

㉒ AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:  ARCHEOLOGY - prehistoric-2  ARCHEOLOGY - historic-1  AGRICULTURE-3  ARCHITECTURE-4  ART-5  COMMERCE-6  COMMUNICATIONS-7  CONSERVATION-8  ECONOMICS-9  EDUCATION-10  ENGINEERING-11  ENTERTAINMENT-26  EXPLORATION-12  HEALTH-27  INDUSTRY-13  INVENTION-14  LANDSCAPE ARCH.-15  LAW-16  LITERATURE-17  MILITARY-18  MUSIC-19  PHILOSOPHY-20  POLITICS / GOVT.-21  RELIGION-22  SCIENCE-23  SOCIAL / HUMANITARIAN-24  SOCIAL / CULTURAL-30  TRANSPORTATION-25  RECREATION-28  SETTLEMENT-29  URBAN PLANNING-31  OTHER (SPECIFY)

㉓ CLAIMS: explain 'first'  'oldest'  'only'

㉔ functions WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: **Campground** CURRENTLY: **Park** ㉕ dates of initial construction: **1892 - 1900's** major alterations: historic events: ㉖ ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION: **Norwegian**

㉗ architectural style(s): ㉘ architect: ㉙ master builder: ㉚ engineer:

㉛ landscape architect / garden designer: ㉜ interior decorator: ㉝ artist: ㉞ artisan: ㉟ builder/contractor: **Johansen - pavilion (no 1st name)**

㊱ NAMES give role & date PERSONAL: EVENTS: INSTITUTIONAL:

㊲ NATIONAL REGISTER WRITER: Park containing 1892 octagonal pavilion, ② c. 1900 houses, stone and iron entrance arches, a Civil War cannon, and ruins of 1920's clubhouse, bathhouse, and gardens; pavilion uses unusual support system of 4 telescoping posts with radiating struts. One of several campgrounds established in the South after Reconstruction to honor Confederate veterans; ~~annual attendance~~ remained popular until the 1940's; revived in 1965 as a county educational and amusement center.

# NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET

Ethnic

① NAME as it appears on federal register: **Johnston, Joseph E. Confederate Reunion Grounds** ② OTHER NAMES: **Jacks Creek Reunion Grounds** ③ date of entry: **4-2-76** ④ county code: **293**

⑤ LOCATION street & number: **4 mi. W of Mexia on F.M. 1633** city / town: **Mexia** vicinity of: **Mexia** state: **TX** county: **limestone** ⑥ NPS REGION: **SW**

⑦ OWNER  PRIVATE  STATE  MUNICIPAL  COUNTY  MULTIPLE  FEDERAL (agency name) ⑧ ADMINISTRATOR: \_\_\_\_\_

⑨ EXISTING SURVEYS  HABS  HAER  NHL ⑩ FUNDED?  YES  NO ⑪ CONGRESS. DISTRICT \_\_\_\_\_ ⑫ SOURCE of NOMINATION  STATE  FEDERAL if state, who prepared form? **TX H.C.**

⑬ WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT?  YES, NAME \_\_\_\_\_  NO ⑭ WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK?  YES, NAME \_\_\_\_\_  NO ⑮ ACREAGE: **70** ⑯ CLAIMS:  LOCAL  PRIVATE ORGANIZATION

⑰ ACCESS  YES - Restricted  YES - Unrestricted  No Access  Unknown ⑱ ADAPTIVE USE  YES  NO ⑲ SAVED?  YES  NO IS PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT?  YES  NO

⑳ AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:  ARCHEOLOGY - prehistoric-2  COMMERCE - 6  ENTERTAINMENT - 26  LANDSCAPE ARCH. - 15  POLITICS / GOVT. - 21  RECREATION - 28  ARCHEOLOGY - historic-1  COMMUNICATIONS - 7  EXPLORATION - 12  LAW - 16  RELIGION - 22  SETTLEMENT - 29  AGRICULTURE - 3  CONSERVATION - 8  HEALTH - 27  LITERATURE - 17  SCIENCE - 23  URBAN PLANNING - 31  ARCHITECTURE - 4  ECONOMICS - 9  INDUSTRY - 13  MILITARY - 18  SOCIAL / HUMANITARIAN - 24  OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_  ART - 5  EDUCATION - 10  INVENTION - 14  PHILOSOPHY - 20  SOCIAL / CULTURAL - 30  TRANSPORTATION - 25

㉑ CLAIMS: explain 'first'  'oldest'  'only'

㉒ functions WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: **Campground** ㉓ dates of initial construction: **1892 - 1920's** major alterations: \_\_\_\_\_ historic events: \_\_\_\_\_ ㉔ ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION: **Norwegian**

㉕ architectural style(s): \_\_\_\_\_ ㉖ architect: \_\_\_\_\_ ㉗ master builder: \_\_\_\_\_ ㉘ engineer: \_\_\_\_\_

㉙ landscape architect / garden designer: \_\_\_\_\_ ㉚ interior decorator: \_\_\_\_\_ ㉛ artist: \_\_\_\_\_ ㉜ artisan: \_\_\_\_\_ ㉝ builder/contractor: **Johansen - pavilion (no 1st name)**

㉞ NAMES give role & date PERSONAL: \_\_\_\_\_ EVENTS: \_\_\_\_\_ INSTITUTIONAL: \_\_\_\_\_

Park containing stone and iron entrance arches; ~~two~~ c. 1900 houses; a Civil War cannon; ruins of 1920's clubhouse, bathhouse, and gardens; and an 1892 octagonal pavilion with an unusual support system of 4 telescoping posts with radiating struts. One of several campgrounds established in South after ~~the~~ Reconstruction to honor Confederate veterans; remained popular until ~~the~~ 1940's; revived in 1965 as a county educational and amusement center