

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JAN 31 1977  
DATE ENTERED AUG 29 1977

**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

Irion County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

Old Irion County Courthouse

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Public Square

CITY, TOWN

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Sherwood

VICINITY OF

21

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Texas

048

Irion

235

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

**OWNERSHIP**

**STATUS**

**PRESENT USE**

\_\_DISTRICT

\_\_PUBLIC

\_\_OCCUPIED

\_\_AGRICULTURE

\_\_MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

\_\_COMMERCIAL

\_\_PARK

\_\_STRUCTURE

\_\_BOTH

\_\_WORK IN PROGRESS

\_\_EDUCATIONAL

\_\_PRIVATE RESIDENCE

\_\_SITE

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

**ACCESSIBLE**

\_\_ENTERTAINMENT

\_\_RELIGIOUS

\_\_OBJECT

\_\_IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

\_\_GOVERNMENT

\_\_SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

\_\_YES: UNRESTRICTED

\_\_INDUSTRIAL

\_\_TRANSPORTATION

\_\_NO

\_\_MILITARY

OTHER: vacant

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Sherwood Community Association

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 807

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Mertzon

VICINITY OF

Texas

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the County Clerk, Irion County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Public Square

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Mertzon

Texas

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Historic Sites Inventory

DATE

1975

\_\_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

Located among mesquite-covered hills on a town square once fronted by commercial buildings, the courthouse now presents a lonely appearance. The wooden commercial buildings are gone and an ornamental wooden fence that once surrounded the square, along with a windmill and tank, have also been removed. An attractive two-story stone-walled jail located near the south entrance to the courthouse has also been razed.

The courthouse location and plan were typical of Texas tradition dating back to the first half of the nineteenth century. The structure is situated in the center of the old town square. The ground-floor plan, is square with four entrances and corridors crossing at right angles, and had been employed for many other courthouses. In the four quadrants were three offices and a vault. However, the second-floor plan with the courtroom at the east end and jury rooms and stairway at the west is not so common. The manner in which projecting masses express the judges bench on the north and the stairway on the south are noteworthy features.

The quarry-faced ashlar limestone is outstanding. Also noteworthy at each entrance, are the Roman arch extrados terminating at sculptural features with simple foliated designs and features encircling likenesses of owls. The "cornerstone" flanking the north entrance and bearing the name of the builders in high relief is also noteworthy.

The construction of the building is typical of the period. Load-bearing walls are masonry throughout; these support 2 x 12 floor joists on the second floor and heavy wooden trusses at the roof. Wooden lintels are used throughout over wall openings. The roof is covered with standing-seam metal and the tower is sheathed with galvanized iron in stamped patterns of Classical details. On the interior, walls are plastered. A wainscot of beaded boards appears in the offices. Located in the west corridor the stairway with its newel posts, and spindles is attractively detailed, and the courtroom has fine woodwork around the openings. Throughout, the woodwork is yellow pine. Overhead, stamped metal ceilings are still intact; the ceiling and cove in the courtroom are especially noteworthy.

Since the building is square, the four facades are similar. The north and south elevations are identical as are the east and west elevations. On each side of the ground level are arched projections which create shallow porches. On the second story, these projections continue to the roof, creating an alcove on the east for the bench in the courtroom. On the north and south sides the projections creating the porches become nearly flush with the building wall, thus creating balconies. These balconies are decorated with slabs of limestone positioned vertically and horizontally to create the effect of a railing-in recent years problems with water leakage have developed from these features.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Irion County ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

Window openings are spanned with both lintels and arches. All the office and jury room openings as well as the corner courtroom window openings have lintels of limestone and contain double hung sashes with two narrow lights in each sash. The stairway and center courtroom window openings are spanned with segmental arches and contain three-light transoms and paired double-hung sashes each of which is similar to those in the other openings.

Following acquisition by the Baptist Church, to accommodate services, two interior load bearing walls were removed from the ground floor, and a truss was installed above the courtroom floor to support the second floor. Otherwise the building is in virtually original condition; few old Texas courthouses have more original fabric intact. The courthouse has never had plumbing installed; outside privies were used.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

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SPECIFIC DATES	1900-1901	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Martin and Moodie architect/builder
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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Irion County Courthouse possesses local historic and architectural significance. The building represents the early history of the county and it possesses fine architectural details.

Located in West Texas, Irion County is primarily ranching country. The county was created from Tom Green County and organized in 1889, and named for Robert A. Irion, a doctor of medicine who practiced his profession in Nacogdoches, Texas, and who became a leader of the Republic of Texas. By 1890, the county population was 870 and in 1973 the population was only about 1,200.

The Old Irion County Courthouse is distinguished architecturally by imposing form and attractive details, and historically by its role in the growth of West Texas. Designed and built by the firm of Martin and Moodie of Comanche, Texas, prominent West Texas contractors, the building has fine details of exterior masonry and of interior wood and metal work.

The courthouse was completed in the spring of 1901 at a cost of \$20,500. Two stories high, the building originally had four offices on the first floor and jury rooms and a courtroom on the second. The courthouse was used until 1936, when Irion County voted to move the county seat to Mertzon by a 453-222 margin. After it was abandoned by county officials, the courthouse was used by the Sherwood Homemakers Club until 1951, when it was bought and used by the Baptist Church. In 1966 a private owner bought the property and donated the use of it to the community of Sherwood. The annual Sherwood Homecoming has been held on the courthouse lawn in June since 1956.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

County Commissioners' Court Minutes, Office of the County Clerk, Mertzon, Texas

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A 14 329200 3461810  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B                 
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The old courthouse is located in Sherwood, about three-tenths of a mile south of the intersection of ranch to market roads 72 and 853. It is about one half mile northeast of Mertzon, the present county seat.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Willard B. Robinson-Professor of Architecture

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Texas Tech University

806/742-2464

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

P.O. Box 4499

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Lubbock

Texas

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

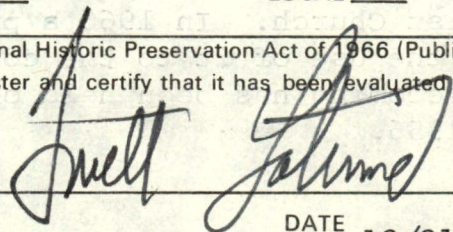
NATIONAL     

STATE   x  

LOCAL     

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

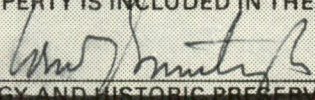


TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 12/21/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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



DATE 8/29/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: Charles Williams

DATE 8.21.77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

77001455

Property Irion County Courthouse  
State Texas Working Number 1.31.77.159

Irion

**TECHNICAL**

Photos 3  
Maps 1

**CONTROL**

*pl*  
OK 2.3.77

**HISTORIAN**

*accept*  
B. Greenwood  
4/26/77

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN**

*Accept*  
Lebovich  
4.18.77

**ARCHEOLOGIST**

**OTHER**

**HAER**

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

**REVIEW UNIT CHIEF**

*Accept*  
Cole  
4.27.77

**BRANCH CHIEF**

*Thurigt*  
8.22.77

**KEEPER**

*Wh*  
8/29/77

National Register Write-up \_\_\_\_\_ Send-back \_\_\_\_\_ Entered AUG 29 1977  
Federal Register Entry 10-4-77 Re-submit \_\_\_\_\_

INT:2106-74



PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Old Irion County Courthouse  
Sherwood, Irion County, Texas

Mike Yancey, Summer 1976  
Texas Historical Commission

North elevation  
Photo #1 of 3

JAN 31 1977

AUG 29 1977



PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Old Irion County Courthouse  
Sherwood, Irion County, Texas

Mike Yancey, Summer 1976  
Texas Historical Commission

Northwest oblique  
Photo #2 of 3

AUG 29 1977

JAN 31 1977



PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Old Irion County Courthouse  
Sherwood, Irion County, Texas

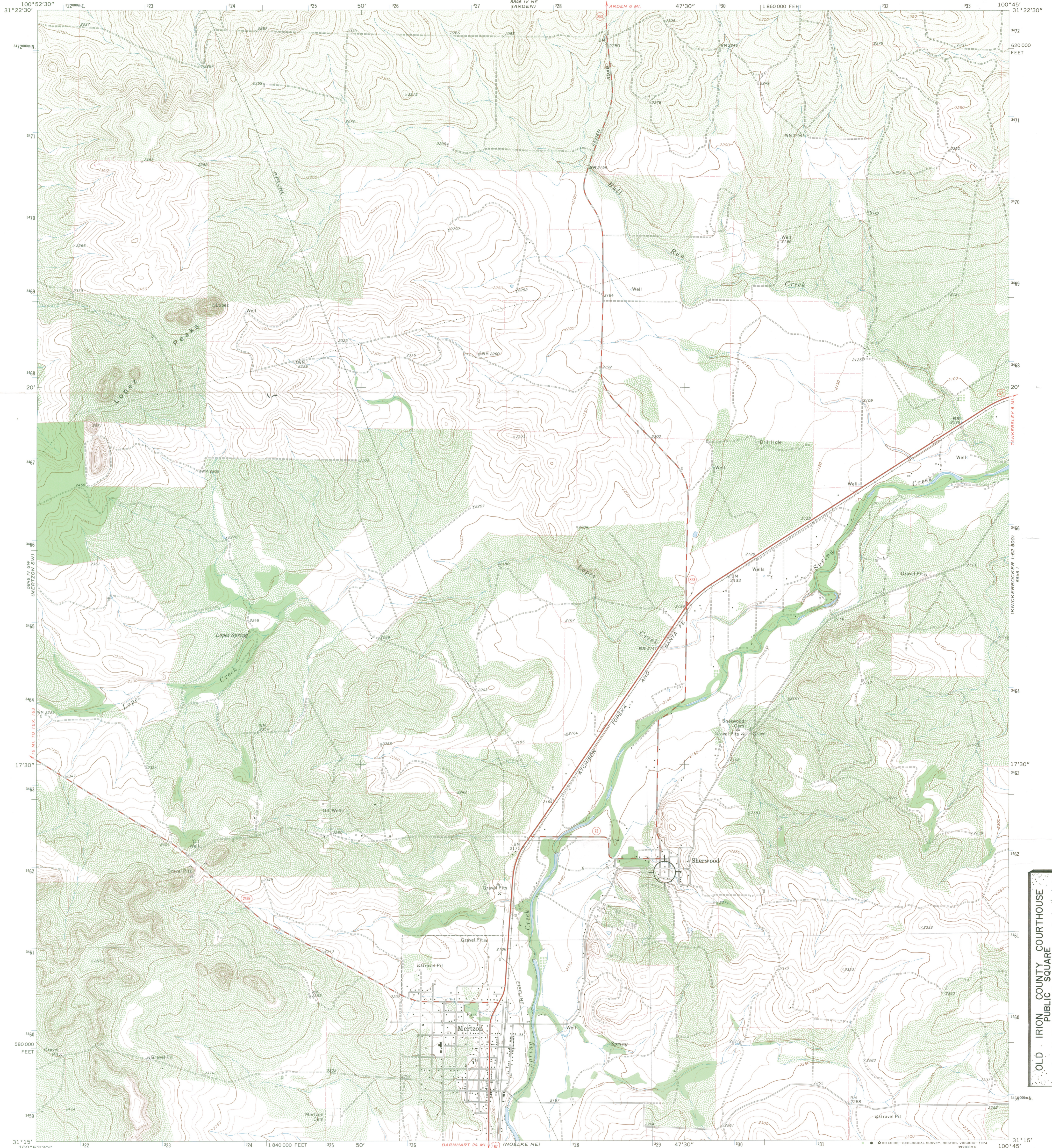
Mike Yancey, Summer 1976  
Texas Historical Commission

Southeast oblique

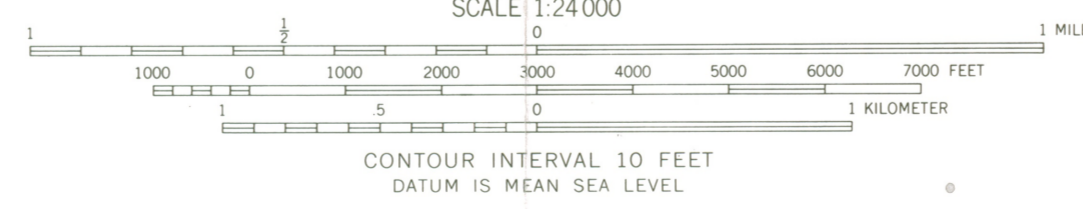
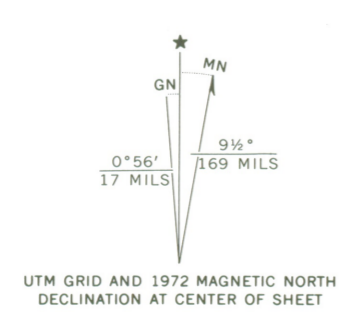
Photo #3 of 3

JAN 31 1977

AUG 29 1977



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1971. Field checked 1972  
Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Texas coordinate system, central zone (Lambert conformal conic)  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 14, shown in blue. 1927 North American datum  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

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

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

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JAN 31 1977  
NATIONAL REGISTER

MERTZON, TEX.  
N3115-W10045/7.5  
1972

AMS 5846 IV SE—SERIES V882

3100-231 AUG 29 1977

OCT 24 1974

OLD IRON COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
PUBLIC SQUARE  
SHERWOOD, TEXAS  
UTM REFERENCE:  
14 7329200 / 3461820

HILLDALE NW  
5846 IV SE

36

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE **TEXAS**

Date Entered **AUG 29 1977**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
<b>Irion County Courthouse</b>	<b>Sherwood Irion County</b>
<b>Tyler Hydraulic-Fill Dam</b>	<b>Tyler vicinity Smith County</b>
<b>Bexar County Courthouse</b>	<b>San Antonio Bexar County</b>
<b>Browne-Wagner House</b>	<b>Brownsville Cameron County</b>

Also Notified

Hon. John G. Tower  
Hon. Lloyd M. Bentsen  
Hon. Robert C. Krueger  
Hon. Ray Roberts  
Hon. Henry B. Gonzalez  
Hon. E. de la Garza

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

Regional Director, Southwest Region

8/31/77

Mott

880

# NR Data Sheet

DATE: 4.18.1977  
 Reviewer INITIALS: **LEBOVICK**  
 NR DOE  
 AUG 29 1977

NAME AS IT APPEARS IN FEDERAL REGISTER: Irion County Courthouse

OTHER NAMES: Old Irion County Courthouse

**LOCATION:**

STREET & NUMBER Public Square

CITY/TOWN Sherwood

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 21st

STATE Ex Texas 48

VICINITY OF

COUNTY Irion code 235

OWNER OF PROPERTY: (Circle) PRIVATE STATE LOCAL GOV'T MUNICIPAL COUNTY OTHER

ADMINISTRATOR (underline)

FEDERAL (AGENCY NAME):

NPS REGION: (CIRCLE) N. ATLANTIC MID ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST MIDWEST

SOUTHWEST ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST PACIFIC NORTHWEST

**FEATURES:**

INTERIOR Substantially intact-1  
 unknown - 4  
 not applicable - 7

EXTERIOR Substantially intact-2  
 unknown - 5  
 not applicable - 8

ENVIRONS Substantially intact-3  
 unknown - 6  
 Not applicable-9

- Interior, exterior, environs not intact-0

CONDITION -

<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED	<input type="checkbox"/> Reconstructed	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexcavated	<input type="checkbox"/> Excavated	

ACCESS - Yes-restricted Yes-unrestricted No access Unknown

historic district? YES NO

WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? YES NO  
 IF YES, NAME:

WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK? YES NO  
 IF YES, NAME:

ADAPTIVE USE: YES NO Saved? YES NO

FUNCTION(S): (use vocabulary words)  
 then- spot ; meeting hall  
 now- vacant

**SIGNIFICANCE:**

- |   |                                       |   |  |   |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION            | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC    | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS    | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW/Gov't/politics     | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE             | <input type="checkbox"/> health         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION    | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN | <input type="checkbox"/> recreation     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE           | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING  | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY               | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)     | <input type="checkbox"/> settlement     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ART                    | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION  | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC                  |  | <input type="checkbox"/> socio/cultural |
| <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE               | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY     | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY             |  | <input type="checkbox"/> urban & commun |
| <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS         | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION    | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS-GOVERNMENT    |  | <input type="checkbox"/> planning       |

**Claims**

"first" YES NO "oldest" YES NO "only" YES NO

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE:

architect/m.builder: *Martin / Moodie*

engineer:

landscape/garden designer:

artist/artisan:

interior decorator:

builder/contractor:

ETHNIC GROUP:

NAMES:

personal

(label role & appropriate date)

events

institutional

DATES:

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (Specific date or 1/4 of century): *1900-1901*

DATE(S) OF "MAJOR" ALTERATIONS:

HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT DATE(S):

SOURCE:

(OF NOMINATION)

PRIVATE

STATE

LOCAL GOV'T

MUNICIPAL

COUNTY

OTHER

FEDERAL AGENCY:

ACREAGE:

(to nearest tenth of an acre)

*2*

COMMENTS: (include architectural information here)

*Stone, 2 story, square, slated hip roof, cupola, 4 dormers, chimneys, central pavilion*

SIGNIFICANCE: (maximum two sentences)

*represents county's early history and possesses fine architectural details.*