

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMPH 0665746  
FOR NPS USE ONLY

DATA SHEET

RECEIVED

MAR 28 1978

DATE ENTERED

JUL 17 1978

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

## 1 NAME



HISTORIC

Brewster County Courthouse and Jail Building

AND/OR COMMON  
N/A

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Courthouse Square: Between Avenues D and E, and  
6th and 7th Streets

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN Alpine

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

16 2/1st

STATE Texas

CODE 048

COUNTY Brewster

CODE 043

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT  
☒ BUILDING(S)  
☐ STRUCTURE  
☐ SITE  
☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC  
☐ PRIVATE  
☐ BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
☐ IN PROCESS  
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED  
☐ UNOCCUPIED  
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
☐ YES: RESTRICTED  
☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED  
☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE ☐ MUSEUM  
☐ COMMERCIAL ☐ PARK  
☐ EDUCATIONAL ☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
☐ ENTERTAINMENT ☐ RELIGIOUS  
☒ GOVERNMENT ☐ SCIENTIFIC  
☐ INDUSTRIAL ☐ TRANSPORTATION  
☐ MILITARY ☐ OTHER:

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

County of Brewster

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Courthouse Square between Avenues D and E, and 6th and 7th Streets.

CITY, TOWN

Alpine

VICINITY OF

STATE

Texas 79830

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Brewster County Courthouse Records

STREET &amp; NUMBER

(same as above)

CITY, TOWN

(same as above)

STATE

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE (Courthouse) Recorded Texas Historical Landmark - 1965  
(Courthouse and Jail Building) Historic Sites Inventory of Texas - 1971

DATE

(See per above)

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Texas Historic Commission, Post Office Box 12276, Capitol Station

CITY, TOWN

Austin

STATE

Texas 78711



# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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

BREWSTER COUNTY COURTHOUSE: Constructed in 1887 in West Texas, the Brewster County Courthouse is an interesting local "vernacular" interpretation of an architectural idiom which was to become known as the American Second Empire Style. This two-and-one-half story brick building laid in Common bond is rectangular in massing with thin, elongated pavilions advancing slightly from the center of each facade. No corner towers, which would be expected in this style, are in evidence.

All four facades are comprised of pairs of elongated, round arch window openings surmounted by curved, pressed-tin hoodmoulds with a single voussoir on center. The window openings on the second story are slightly longer than those on the first story. Each bay of paired windows is delineated by vertical brick strips or referential pilasters. The Brewster County Courthouse rests on a small base of rusticated local limestone with a brick belt-course separating the facades between the first and second stories.

The shorter east and west facades are comprised of three bays of paired round arch window openings with a pressed-tin "frontispiece" doorway on the first floor pavilion comprised of a triangular pediment supported on single Doric pilasters resting on single paneled podiums, and a semicircular, two-pane light over paneled, wooden double doors. The longer north and south facades are comprised of two stories of five bays of paired round arch windows with similar pilaster strips. The north facade has no doorway and the recent addition of a two-story brick wing to the northwest half of this facade has obscured the two northwest bays and part of the north pavilion. The south facade has a similar pressed-tin "frontispiece" doorway, although the door itself has been removed and replaced with a twentieth century aluminum frame window. All original window frames (wooden, double-hung, four-over-four-light sash) have survived, with the exception of those on the second story of the east facade and portions of the second stories of the north and south facades. These have been replaced with fixed wooden shutters.

A pressed-tin entablature, comprised of a paneled frieze and a cornice, surmounts the building. Pairs of pressed-tin brackets are incorporated within the entablature and reflect the spacing of the brick pilaster strips below and serve as referential (or interpretative) capitals to them. Pressed-tin triangular pediments crown the pavilions throughout. The radically clipped, wood-framed, pyramidal roof of standing-seam-tin is capped by pressed-tin cresting in the pattern of a cornice. Triangular, two-paned dormers punctuate the roof line: four each on the north and south facades and two each on the east and west facades. Originally, each pavilion was capped with a large attenuated Mansard-like roof with a single round arch four-light window. These, however, were removed in the second half of this century.

The first floor of the wood-frame interior is bisected by a center hall on the east/west axis dividing offices equally on both sides. Exemplary pressed-tin ceilings and some of the original woodwork have survived. A handsome wooden staircase with "Eastlake-like" details rises from the first floor to the General Courtroom on the second floor. Extensive remodeling has taken place on the second floor. However, much of the original fabric has been maintained beneath the new paneling and above the newly lowered ceilings.



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BREWSTER COUNTY JAIL: Also constructed and presumably designed by Tom Lovell in 1887, the Brewster County Jail building is a two story brick structure of an "L" plan and massing laid in common bond. In 1921, an addition was added to the south side of the pile conforming and, therefore, preserving the "L" shape massing. A rusticated stone base of local limestone rises several feet on the jail complex. However, the most interesting and wholly outstanding architectural detail is the fine brick crenelated parapet wall which crowns the flat, wood framed roof. The choice of this "detail" in contrast with the quasi-Second Empire detailing on the contemporaneous Courthouse is an interesting testimony to the symbolic implications, vis a vis qualities, of "fortress-like impregnability" which must have been important design parameters to the builder and the County Commissioners. Several corbeled chimneys rise from behind the parapet wall.

Window openings throughout are round arch with brick hoodmoulds and brick sills on the unaltered openings and stone sills on those windows which are added in the 1921 addition or those affected by that addition. The original windows (wood frame, double-hung, two-over-two-light sash) have survived. Requisite iron bars exist on the exterior of windows where they were deemed appropriate for security.

A one story wood frame porch on a stone base supported by wooded Doric columns on brick podiums was constructed at the interior intersection of the two "L" wings. A flight of stone steps to the porch gives the only access to the building.

The first floor interior of the Brewster County Jail is arranged around the quarters and offices of the sheriff and staff. The second floor contains freestanding iron cells provided and built by the Diebold Safe and Lock Company--an unusual situation in Texas where the Pauley Jail Building and Manufacturing Company dominated the field. Little of the original interior detailing remains.



## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input 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 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		

SPECIFIC DATES Built 1887 (both) BUILDER/ARCHITECT Tom Lovell (Builder)

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Brewster County Courthouse and Jail Building, like so many other such complexes in the other counties of Texas, traditionally were and still remain the physical and governmental focal point of the community of Alpine and the larger community of Brewster County. In an age where these traditional seats of government are often demolished or substantially denatured, the Brewster County Courthouse and Jail Building have survived remarkably. They deserve to continue to do so. Both buildings possess historical significance in that they have served as the government seat of Brewster County (the largest of Texas' counties) since their inception in 1887. Architecturally, both buildings dominate the community of Alpine as excellent examples of locally interpreted nineteenth century styles.

The territory of Brewster County has been under a number of political jurisdictions. Originally considered part of Chihuahua, Mexico, during Spanish and Mexican rule, the area was later attached to Bexar County following Texas independence. From 1848 to 1887 the Brewster County area was under the jurisdiction of Santa Fe County (1848), El Paso County (1849-1871), and Presidio County (1875-1887). When the Presidio County seat was moved from Fort Davis to Marfa, dissatisfaction among residents in this area led to the creation of Brewster County in 1887. Murpheyville, renamed that year as Alpine, became the county seat.

Built in 1887, the Brewster County Courthouse and Jail were the first monuments to the newly organized county and continue to serve in their original capacities. Only a few Texas counties still utilize either their first courthouse or jail. The Brewster County complex also holds the distinction of serving Texas' largest county with an area of 5935 square miles. The county was enlarged to its present size in 1897 when the proposed Buchel and Foley counties were abolished and their territory added to Brewster.

As an architectural entity, the Brewster County Courthouse presents an interesting and rather sophisticated local interpretation of the Second Empire Style. Tom Lovell, the local nineteenth century contractor and presumed designer, showed a substantial comprehension of design, massing, fenestration, and detailing making the Brewster County Courthouse one of the finest buildings in Brewster county.

Although simpler in program and detail than the Brewster County Courthouse, the Brewster County Jail is architecturally interesting for its vigorous, strong detailing and massing. It is an interesting exercise in a quasi "Gothick" fortress-like style (although the window detailing certainly belies this assertion) whose architectural presence enhances the Brewster County Courthouse complex immeasurably.



## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- 1) Brewster County Deed Book #1, pages 25, 37, 51, and 168.
- 2) National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form. "Historic Resources of Texas County Government Properties - Individual County Seats of Texas," (unsubmitted as yet), 1978.
- 3) Robinson, Willard B., Texas Public Buildings of the 19th Century. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1974.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.77

QUADRANGLE NAME Alpine South, Texas

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 13 628520 3359050

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

E

G

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D

F

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Brewster County Courthouse and Jail Building are located in the city of Alpine - the County Seat. The buildings are on a lot bounded on the north and south by D and E Avenues, and on the east and west by 6th and 7th Streets respectively.

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

STATE N/A

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Marie Landon---THC

de Teel Patterson Tiller Architectural Historian, Historic Resources Planner

ORGANIZATION

DATE

West Texas Council of Governments

February 23, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

303 North Oregon Street, Suite 700 Mills Building

915-532-2910

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

El Paso

Texas 79901

## 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

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 7.17.78

DATE 6.29.78



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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10

PAGE 1

The property chosen for the Brewster County Courthouse and the Brewster County Jail Building in 1887, commonly referred to as "the Courthouse Square," was Lot #2 of Block 15 - Deeded by A. J. Mills to the County of Brewster, November 26, 1887 (Deed Book 1, page 168); Lots #1, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 of Block 15 - Deeded by Thos. O. Murphy to T. S. Brockenbrow, County Judge of Brewster County, May 15, 1887 (Deed Book 1, page 25); Lots #4 and 5 of Block 15 - Deeded by James Steward and Minnie A. A. Stewart to Brewster County, May 25, 1887 (Deed Book 1, page 51); and Lot #3 of Block 15 - Deeded by T. S. Brockenbrow to Brewster County, May 13, 1887 (Deed Book 1, page 37).



Property

BREWSTER COUNTY COURTHOUSE AND JAIL BUILDING

State

*Id.*

Working Number

*3.28.78.2774*

*Brewster*

*78002899*

TECHNICAL

Photos

*4*

Maps

*1*

*#12 needs level*

*J. Williams* CONTROL

*6.8.*

*OK 3.29.78*

HISTORIAN

*Accept  
Franklin  
5.15.78*

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

*A COURTHOUSE AND JAIL EXECUTED IN  
A LOCAL ADAPTATION OF ARCHITECTURAL STYLES.  
THE COURTHOUSE IS A VARIATION OF THE SECOND EMPIRE  
WHILE THE JAIL HAS GOTHIC/ROMANESQUE INFLUENCES.*

*Accept  
H. Spink  
5/5/78*

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory

Review

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

*as examples of 2nd Empire  
executed at county level and for  
importance to county, these buildings are  
significant.*

*Accept  
Lebowich  
6/6/78*

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

*Accepted  
7/17/78*

National Register Write-up

Send-back

Entered

*JUL 17 1978*

Federal Register Entry

*9.5.78*

Re-submit

INT:2106-74







PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Brewster County Courthouse & Jail  
Alpine, Brewster Co., Texas

Texas Historical Commission, 1971

East elevation of courthouse  
Photo #1 84

MAR 28 1978

JUL 17 1978







PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Brewster County Courthouse & Jail  
Alpine, Brewster Co., Texas

*Brewster County Courthouse*  
West Texas Council of Gov'ts

1978 *S.E.*

South elevation of courthouse

Photo #2 *24*

JUL 17 1978

MAR 28 1978

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER







Brewster County Courthouse & Jail  
Alpine, Brewster Co., Texas

Texas Historical Commission, 1971

Southeast Oblique of courthouse  
Photo #3 <sup>24</sup>

JUL 17 1978

MAR 28 1978

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES







PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Brewster County Jail*

Brewster County Courthouse & Jail  
Alpine, Brewster Co., Texas

Texas Historical Commission, 1971

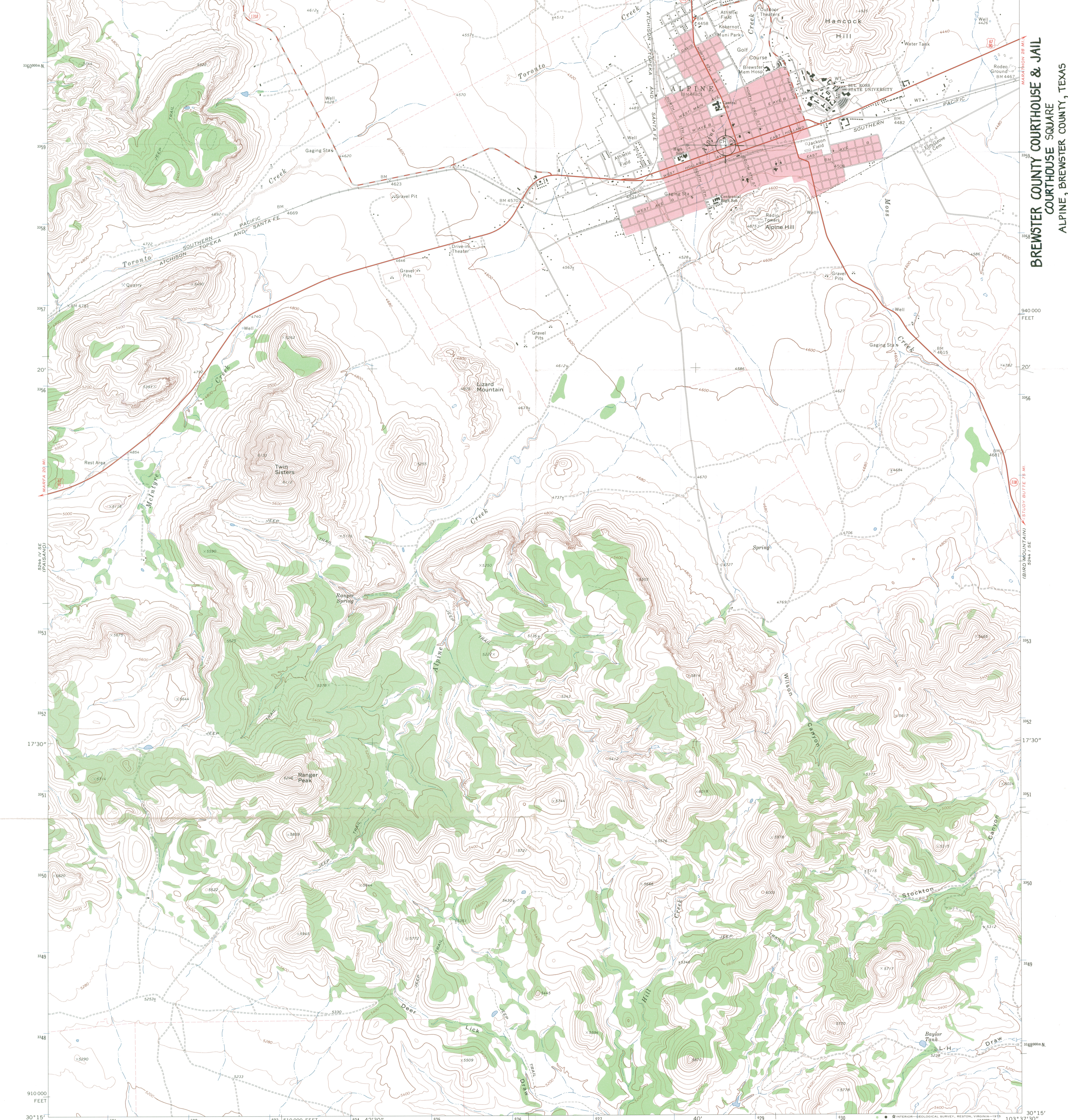
Southeast oblique of the Jail

484  
~~484~~

JUL 17 1978

MAR 28 1978







ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE TEXAS

Date Entered JUL 17 1978

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Brewster County Courthouse and Jail	Alpine Brewster County
Black, E. B., House	Hereford Deaf Smith County
Mount Eliza	LaGrange Fayette County

Also Notified

Honorable Lloyd M. Bentsen  
Honorable John G. Tower  
Honorable Robert C. Krueger  
Honorable George H. Mahon  
Honorable J. J. (Jake) Pickle

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



# NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET

① NAME as it appears on federal register: Brewster County Courthouse and Jail				② OTHER NAMES:		③ date of entry: JUL 17 1978		④ county code: 43			
⑤ LOCATION street & number Courthouse Sq.		city / town Alpine		vicinity of		state TX		county Brewster			
						⑥ NPS REGION: SW					
⑦ OWNER <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE <input type="checkbox"/> STATE <input type="checkbox"/> MUNICIPAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COUNTY <input type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE <input type="checkbox"/> FEDERAL (agency name)						⑧ ADMINISTRATOR:					
⑨ EXISTING SURVEYS <input type="checkbox"/> HABS <input type="checkbox"/> HAER <input type="checkbox"/> NHL						⑩ FUNDED? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		⑪ CONGRESS. DISTRICT 16th			
						⑫ SOURCE of NOMINATION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STATE <input type="checkbox"/> FEDERAL					
⑬ WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? <input type="checkbox"/> YES, NAME <input type="checkbox"/> NO			⑭ WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK? <input type="checkbox"/> YES, NAME <input type="checkbox"/> NO			⑮ ACREAGE		if state who prepared form? de Teel Patterson Tiller			
⑯ CONDITION			⑰ features:								
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent <input type="checkbox"/> good <input type="checkbox"/> fair			<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> ruins <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed <input type="checkbox"/> unexcavated			<input type="checkbox"/> altered <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered <input type="checkbox"/> reconstructed <input type="checkbox"/> excavated			<input type="checkbox"/> original site <input type="checkbox"/> moved <input type="checkbox"/> unknown		
			INTERIOR <input type="checkbox"/> SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1 <input type="checkbox"/> NOT INTACT-0 <input type="checkbox"/> UNKNOWN-4 <input type="checkbox"/> NOT APPLICABLE-7			EXTERIOR <input type="checkbox"/> SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-2 <input type="checkbox"/> NOT INTACT-0 <input type="checkbox"/> UNKNOWN-5 <input type="checkbox"/> NOT APPLICABLE-8			ENVIRONS <input type="checkbox"/> SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-3 <input type="checkbox"/> NOT INTACT-0 <input type="checkbox"/> UNKNOWN-6 <input type="checkbox"/> NOT APPLICABLE-9		
⑱ ACCESS <input type="checkbox"/> YES-Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> YES-Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No Access <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown				⑲ ADAPTIVE USE <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		⑳ SAVED? <input type="checkbox"/> YES		㉑ IS PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no			
㉒ AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE :				㉓ CLAIMS: explain							
<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-prehistoric-2 <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-historic-1 <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE-3 <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE-4 <input type="checkbox"/> ART-5				<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING-11 <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT-26 <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION-12 <input type="checkbox"/> HEALTH-27 <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS-9 <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION-10				<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCH.-15 <input type="checkbox"/> LAW-16 <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE-17 <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY-18 <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC-19 <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY-20			
				<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVT.-21 <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION-22 <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE-23 <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN-24 <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/CULTURAL-30 <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION-25				<input type="checkbox"/> RECREATION-28 <input type="checkbox"/> SETTLEMENT-29 <input type="checkbox"/> URBAN PLANNING-31 <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)			
㉔ functions WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: CURRENTLY:				㉕ dates of initial construction: major alterations: historic events:				㉖ ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION			
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:			
㊱ NAMES give role & date PERSONAL:  EVENTS:  INSTITUTIONAL:											

㊲ NATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP