

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUL 16 1979  
DATE ENTERED SEP 13 1979

**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 Schulenburg Cotton Compress

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER James and Main Streets

CITY, TOWN

Schulenburg

VICINITY OF CODE

48

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

10

STATE

Texas

COUNTY

Fayette

CODE

149

**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"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Inactive

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Rigmaster Incorporated

STREET & NUMBER 9046 Long Point Road, P.O. Box 55626

CITY, TOWN

Houston

VICINITY OF

STATE

Texas

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Fayette County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

La Grange

STATE

Texas

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Texas Historic Engineering Site Inventory

DATE

1976

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

History of Engineering Program, Texas Tech University

CITY, TOWN

Lubbock

STATE

Texas

# 7 DESCRIPTION

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input 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      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Housed within an industrial complex conveniently sited on the Southern Pacific railroad line in Schulenburg, the Schulenburg Cotton Compress exists today, virtually intact since its operating days. In 1886 the Schulenburg Compress Company negotiated the purchase of an early Morse model Cotton Press constructed by the Scott Foundry at Reading, Pennsylvania. Patented on May 28, 1878 (# 204,240), the Morse model, weighing approximately 350 tons, was equipped with a ninety inch cylinder which produced nearly 2000 tons of pressure, standard density, with power produced by steam from a coal boiler. The steam compress was approximately sixty feet high and its operation required a minimum of twenty-two laborers in two operating shifts. Standard gin bales had a density of ten to twelve pounds per cubic foot and measured fifty-six inches in length, twenty-eight inches in width, and forty-five inches in thickness while standard density compressed bales had a density of twenty-two and one half pounds per cubic foot and measured fifty-six, by thirty-one, by twenty-two inches.

In 1929 the compress was altered to a high density press. Visibly, the alteration consisted of four small, hand-forged metal arms attached to the exterior for additional support; however, the pressure produced by the high density compression measured 15,000 pounds. High density bales measured fifty-seven, by twenty-two, by twenty-one inches, with a density of thirty-two pounds per cubic foot.

The compress was housed in a large, utilitarian structure which reflects its function through materials and massing. Utilizing wooden structural members sheathed in corrugated metal, the form reflects the verticality of the compress. The structure is not included as a part of the nomination; however, any alterations or removal of it should be considered insignificant only if the compress is not affected adversely by such action. Although the press ceased to function in 1968, it exists today in excellent condition, requiring only minor repairs to return it to operation.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

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

SPECIFIC DATES 1886, 1929 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Scott Foundry, Reading, Penn.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Schulenburg Cotton Compress is one of the few remaining 19th century steam cotton compresses in the southwestern United States. One of the earlier Morse models, patented on May 28, 1878, the Schulenburg Compress was important to both the national cotton industry and the local economy. From this early prototype, other compresses were evolved which offered increased compression with a decrease in the size of the machinery. Located in a fertile farming region with a constant supply of water, Schulenburg, like many Texas communities, developed an economy in which cotton played a lead role. A 19th century Texas law maintained that all cotton shipped from Texas ports must first be compressed. Linked to the coast by the Southern Pacific Railroad, Schulenburg became a compression center for cotton grown in west Texas. In addition, the nation's first cottonseed crushing plant was engineered in Schulenburg followed by the development of a process of refining cottonseed oil. In 1883 the Schulenburg Oil Mill was established where flour, claimed to have five times the nutritive value of wheat flour, was manufactured from cottonseed by the Baumgarten Process. Thus the economic growth and stability of Schulenburg was integrally related to cotton, brought into the town for processing or compression prior to exportation.

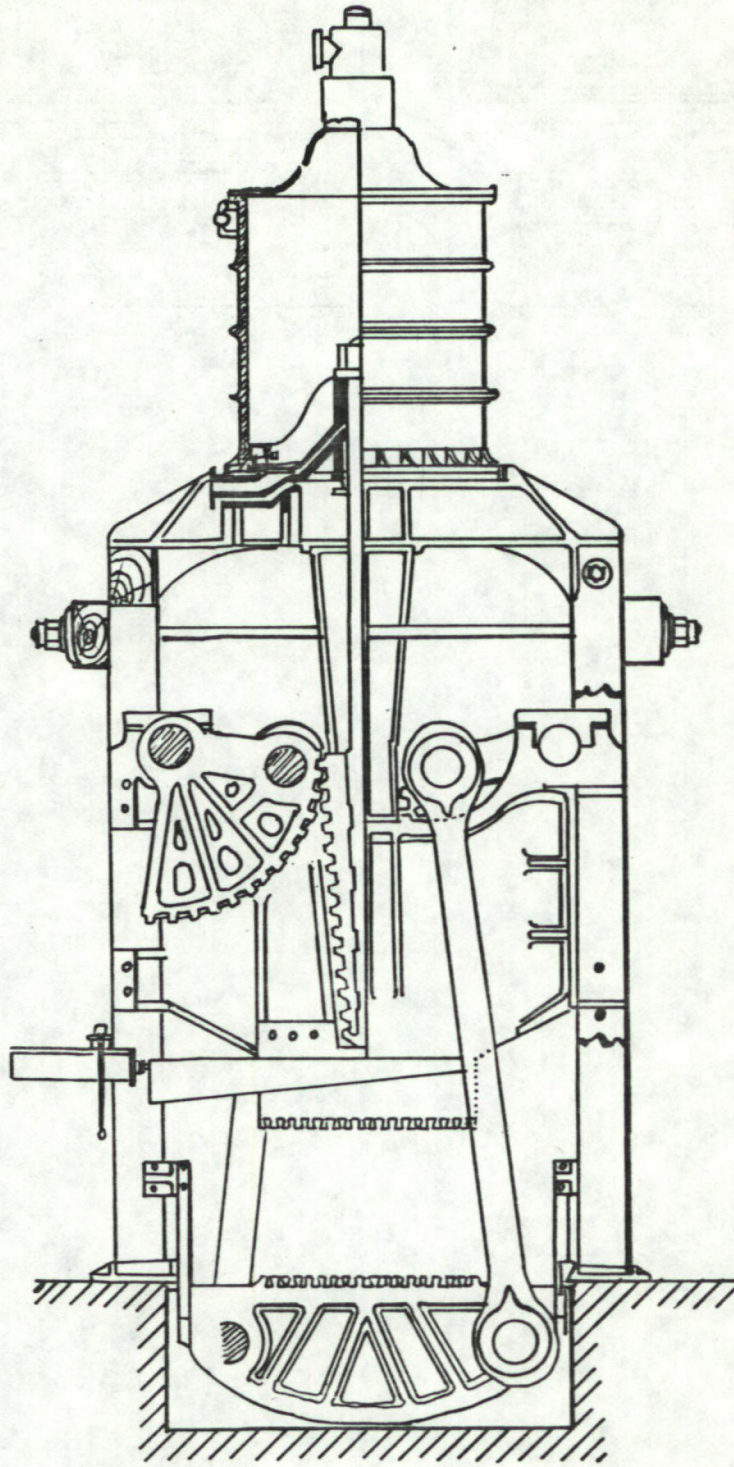
On August 7, 1886, the newly incorporated Schulenburg Compress Company negotiated with S. B. Steers of New Orleans for the purchase of a slightly-used Morse Cotton-Press. The two parties reached an agreement in which Steers received a total of \$27,000 in exchange for the press, paid in installments of \$8,000 in cash, \$16,500 in two promissory notes, and one half of the capital stock of the Schulenburg Compress Company. Having purchased the press, the company then bought a parcel of land in Schulenburg from Thomas Wentworth Pierce a relative of President Franklin Pierce. Next, a structure was erected to house the machinery and serve as a warehouse on the property, which was adjacent to the railroad tracks. The facility allowed for eighteen boxcars (nine on two tracks) to be utilized, providing a continuous cycle of loading and unloading cotton.

On August 3, 1926, the Schulenburg Compress Company was auctioned for \$4,500 to diminish its debt. Dr. I.E. Clark, president of the company, purchased it and hired F.O. Brown to manage it. In 1927, Brown and an associate purchased the company for \$16,000. The press was transformed from standard density to high density operation in 1929 and continued to function in that capacity until 1951 when the cylinder blew off with such pressure that it passed through the roof of the structure. The cylinder of the press was repaired immediately and the press continued to operate until 1968. Recently, present owners, Rigmaster Incorporated began dismantling boilers of the compress. However, due to an unfeasible dismantling bid, the action was halted, leaving the press virtually intact.

From an engineering perspective, the mere existence of the press is significant. Functioning for over eighty years, the press stands today in good condition, capable of operating with only minor repairs. The Schulenburg Press is one of the few existing in such good condition. Additionally, the press reflects the major role that cotton played in the Schulenburg community.



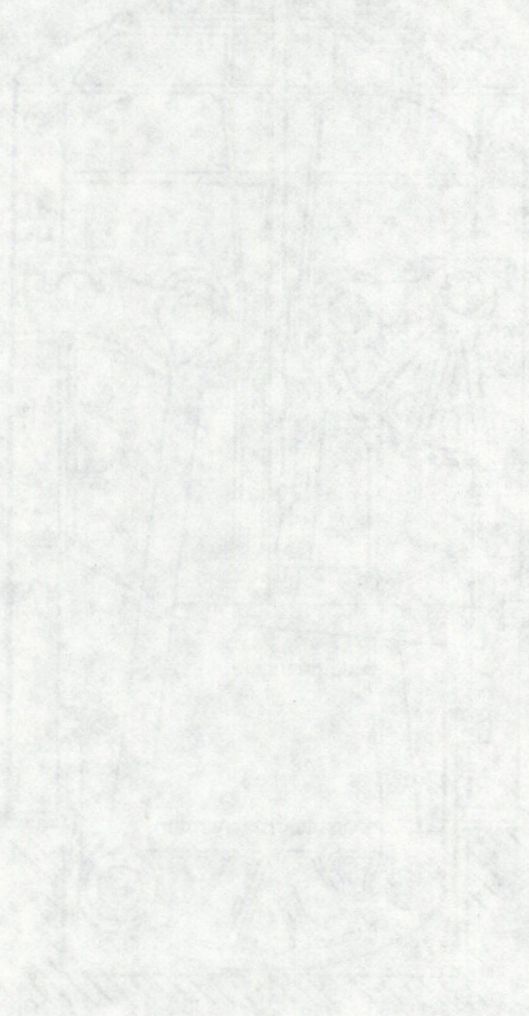
FIG. 1



**SCHULENBURG COTTON COMPRESS**  
SCHULENBURG, FAYETTE COUNTY, TEXAS

U.S. PATENT NO. 204,240

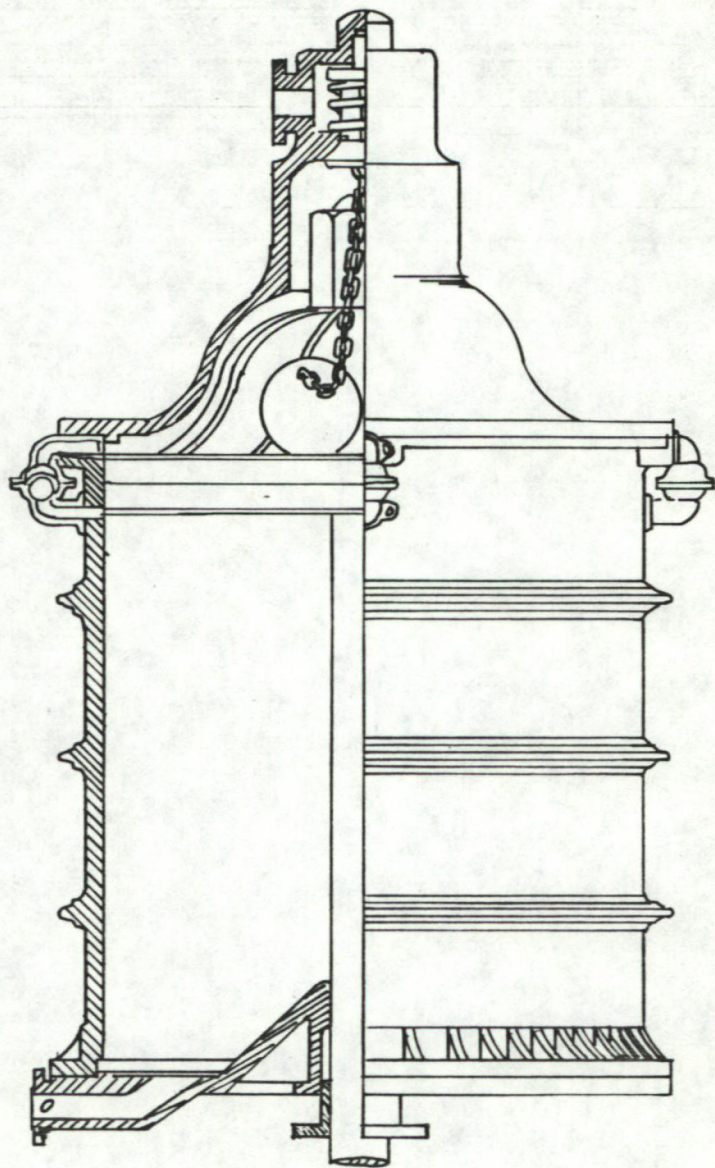
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FIG. 2



**SCHULENBURG COTTON COMPRESS**  
SCHULENBURG, FAYETTE COUNTY, TEXAS

U.S. PATENT NO. 204,240

100-1116

SEP 13 1979

Property Schulenburg Cotton Compress

State La. (Fayette) Working Number 7.16.79.1690

79002938

**TECHNICAL**

Photos 4  
Maps     

*Nothing incorrect*

**CONTROL**

*pl*  
7.18.79

**HISTORIAN**

*As one of the few remaining 19<sup>th</sup> C. steam cotton compresses in the SE U.S., this is significant in representing the importance of cotton to many parts of TX in the late 19<sup>th</sup> C. But - do we accept machinery w/o the structures that house it? Also, when & where was this manufactured and what was its history before 1886? I'd like to see what HAER has to say.*

*accept 9/12*  
*Grosvenor*  
*9/4/79*

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN**

*The present <sup>cover</sup> structure is incidental to the significance of the Compress.*

**ARCHEOLOGIST**

**OTHER**

**HAER**

*The Cotton Compress is obviously a rare surviving machine representing the state's early agricultural history. I'm not sure why the building around the machine was not nominated, but this may well be an action that is an appropriate prerogative of the state.*

Inventory       
Review 9/11/79  
*Don Jackson*

**REVIEW UNIT CHIEF**

*I don't believe the compress' history before 1886 is that important to nomination. Conference needed to discuss whether structure surrounding compress should be nominated.*

*accept*  
*B. Grosvenor*

**BRANCH CHIEF**

*I see no reason why the State needs to nominate the structure surrounding the machinery.*

*Accept*  
*the machinery*  
*Shul 9-13-79*

**KEEPER**

National Register Write-up     

Federal Register Entry 10-2-79

Send-back     

Re-submit     

Entered SEP 13 1979



Schulenburg Cotton Compress

Schulenburg, Fayette County, Texas

James and Main Streets

Photo: Civil Engineering Department,  
Texas Tech University, 7/28/76

South facade of loading dock and compress  
structure

Photo # 1

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Schulenburg Cotton Compress

James and Main Streets

Schulenburg, Fayette County, Texas

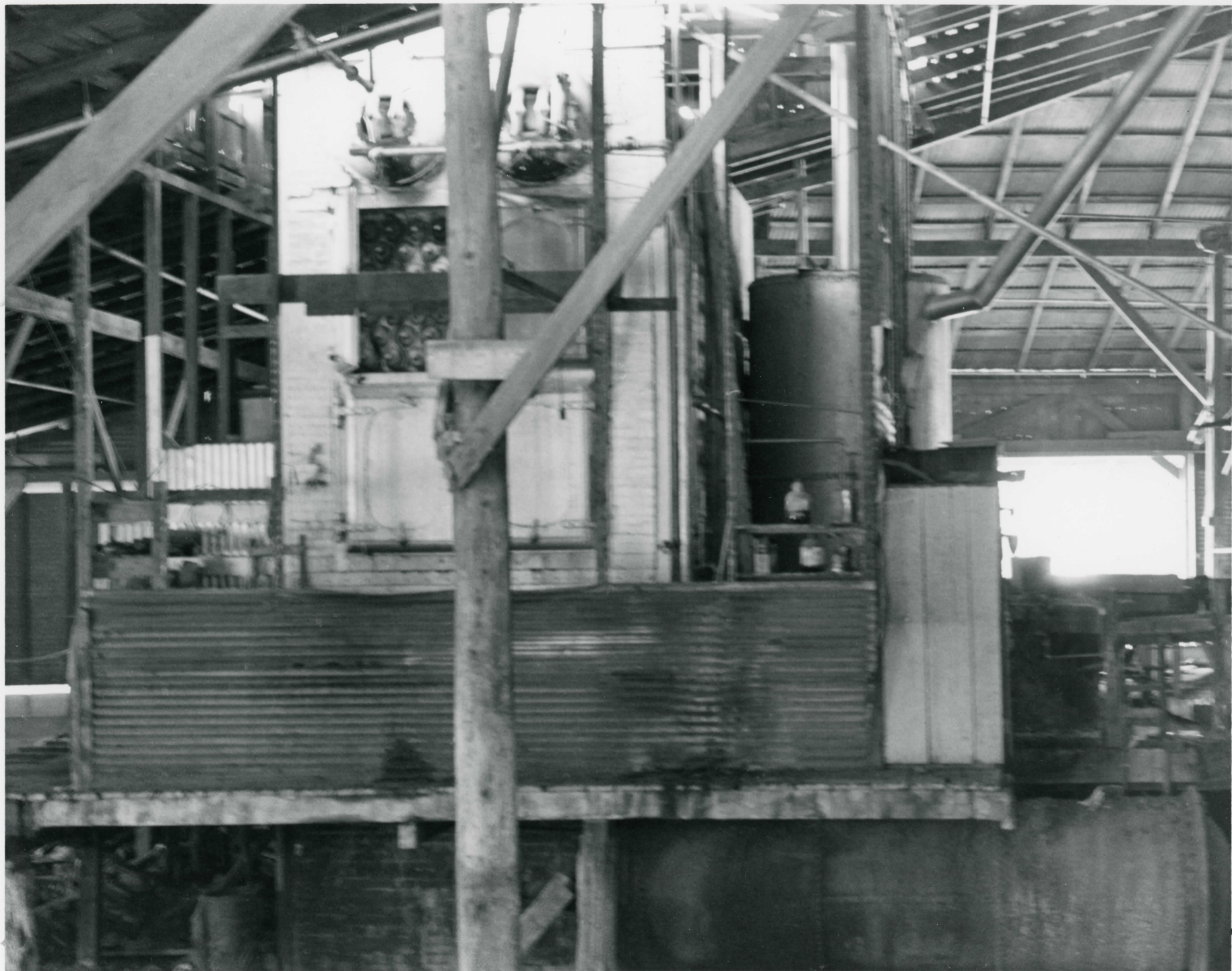
Photo: Rick Lewis, 3/76

Base of Compress

Photo # 2

JUL 16 1979

SEP 13 1979



Schulenburg Cotton Compress

James and Main Streets

Schulenburg, Fayette County, Texas

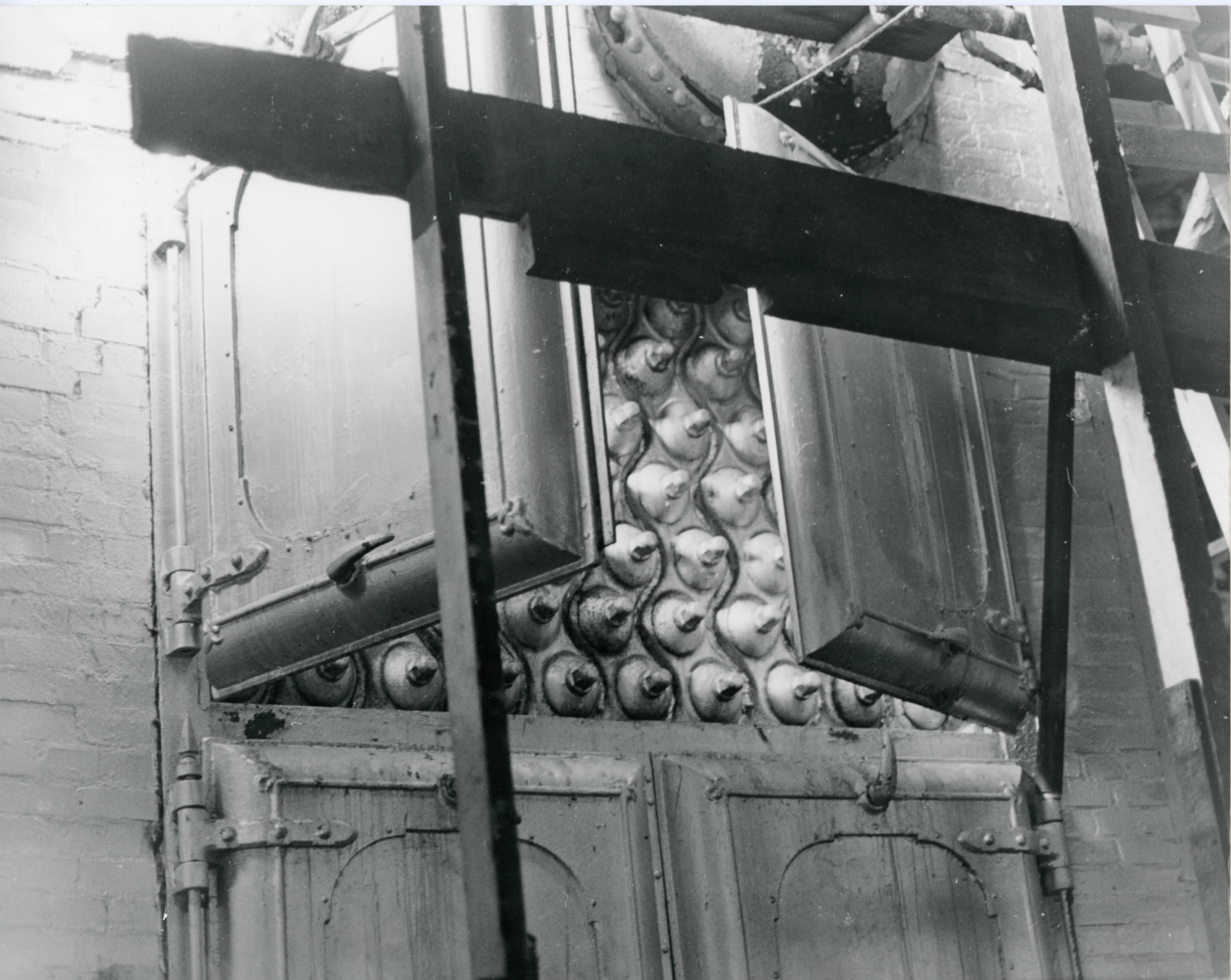
Photo: Civil Engineering Department  
Texas Tech University, 3/28/76

Detail, boilers for compress

Photo # 3

JUL 16 1979

SEP 13 1979



Schulenburg Cotton Compress

James and Main Streets

Schulenburg, Fayette County, Texas

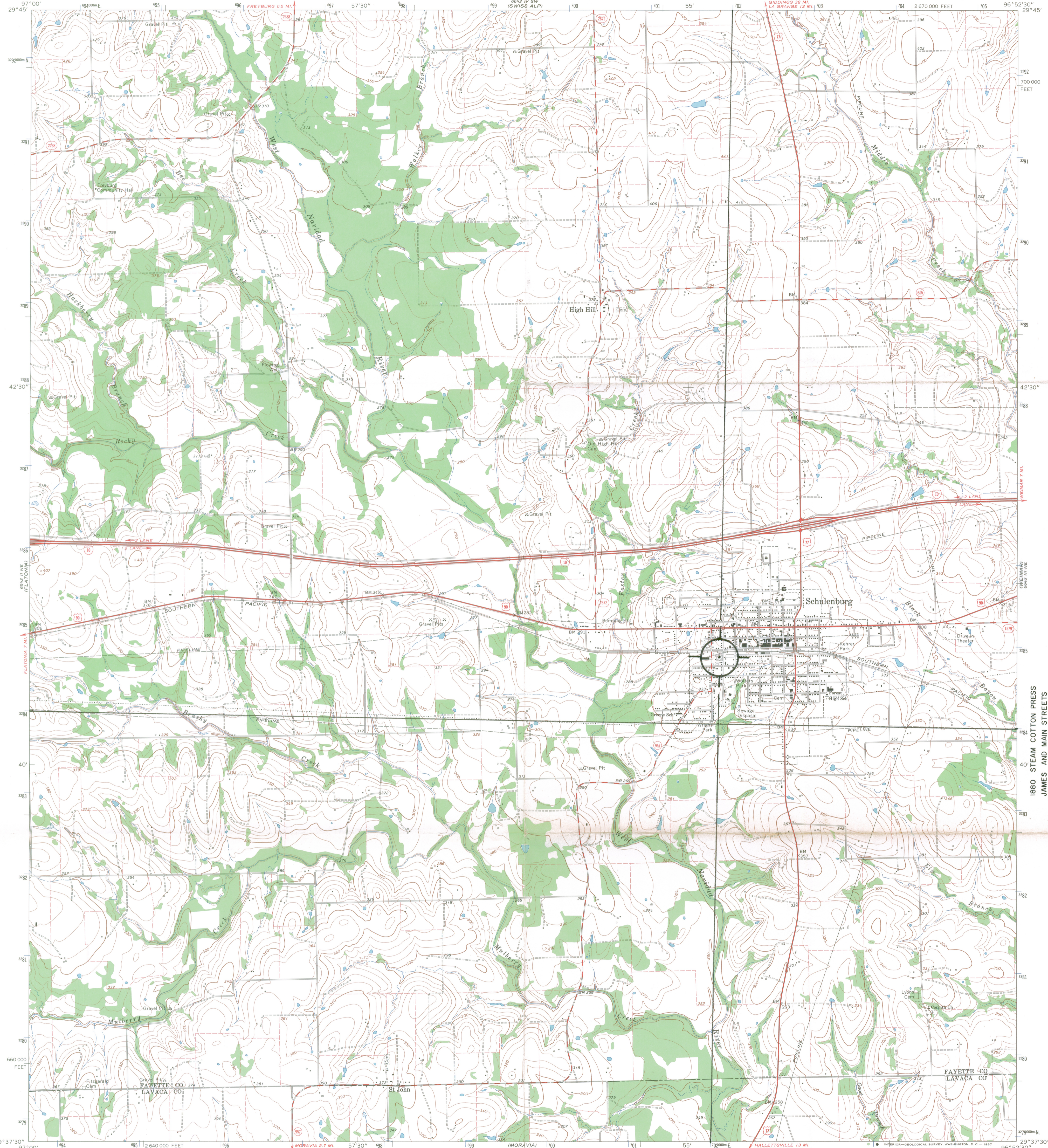
Photo: Civil Engineering Department  
Texas Tech University, 3/76

Detail, boiler tubes

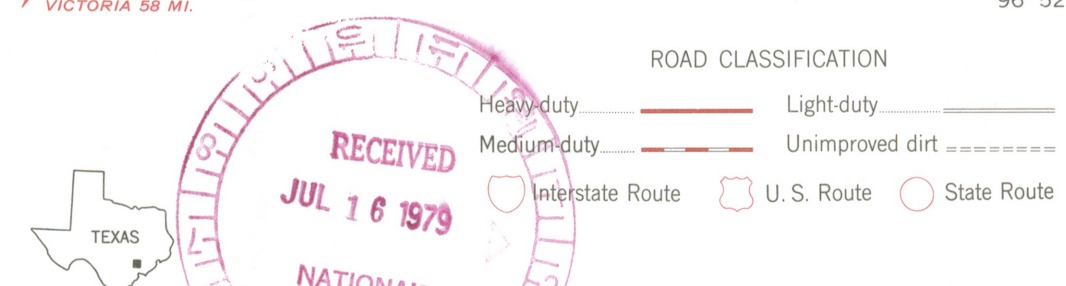
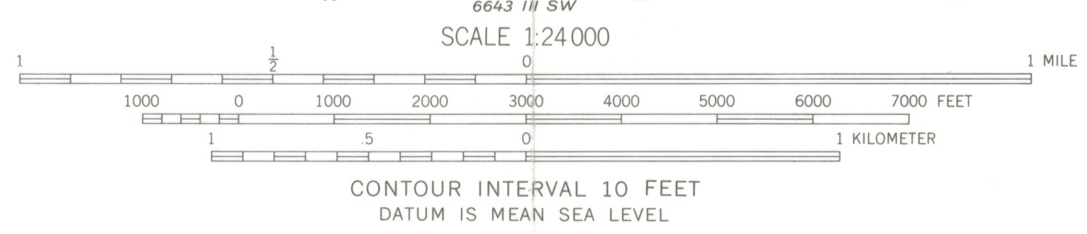
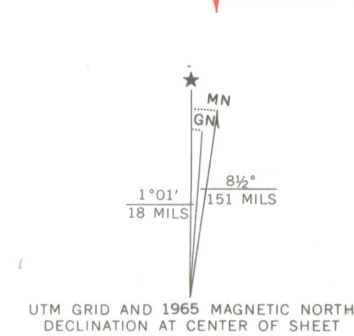
Photo # 4

SEP 13 1979

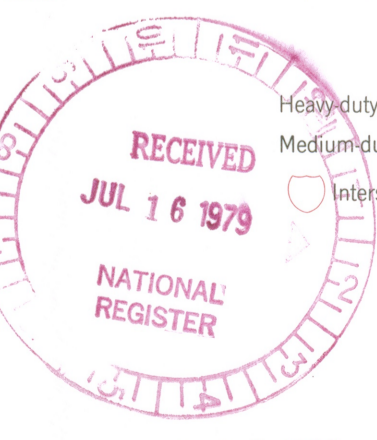
JUL 16 1979



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial  
photographs taken 1964. Field checked 1965  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system,  
south central zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 14, shown in blue  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines



QUADRANGLE LOCATION



SCHULENBURG, TEX.  
N2937.5-W9652.5/7.5

1965

AMS 6643 III NW—SERIES V882

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

1880 STEAM COTTON PRESS  
JAMES AND MAIN STREETS  
SCHULENBURG, TEXAS  
UTM REFERENCE:  
14T020000/3282500

3284-830

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

TEXAS

STATE

Date Entered      SEP 13 1979

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Schulenburg Cotton Compress	Schulenburg Fayette County

Also Notified

Honorable Lloyd M. Bentsen

Honorable John G. Tower  
Honorable J. J. (Jake) Pickle

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

NR      Byers/bjr      9/20/79