

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED FEB 14 1979

DATE ENTERED MAR 30 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

Daniel Webster Kempner House

AND/OR COMMON

Las Palmas

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

2504 Avenue O

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Galveston

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

— VICINITY OF

9

STATE

Texas

CODE

COUNTY

Galveston

CODE

167

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

— COMMERCIAL

— EDUCATIONAL

— ENTERTAINMENT

— GOVERNMENT

— INDUSTRIAL

— MILITARY

— MUSEUM

— PARK

 PRIVATE RESIDENCE

— RELIGIOUS

— SCIENTIFIC

— TRANSPORTATION

— OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Daniel Kempner Thorne

STREET & NUMBER

2504 Avenue O

CITY, TOWN

Galveston

— VICINITY OF

Texas

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Galveston County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

722 Moody

CITY, TOWN

Galveston

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Galveston through HUD 701 Grant

DATE

October 1976

— FEDERAL — STATE — COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

City of Galveston, City Hall

CITY, TOWN

823 Rosenberg, Galveston

STATE

Texas

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

The Daniel Webster Kempner House is located at 2504 Avenue O, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas. The parcel of land on which the Kempner House is situated originally measured 150' by 360'; a portion of this land was sold, and now the property measures 120' by 150'. The Kempner House is a two-and-a-half story residence reminiscent of the Spanish Colonial Revival style. It was built in 1907-1908, with several alterations occurring at unknown dates. Changes to the dormer window occurred in 1961, following damage by Hurricane Carla.

The house consists of a central block with a single bay entrance porch. It is of frame construction with a textured stucco exterior and a gabled roof of rounded, red Spanish clay tiles. The front entry porch is marked by two stuccoed columns and two stuccoed pilasters with Doric capitals. The outside end chimney on the west elevation is stucco and is capped in a way reminiscent of adobe chimney flues in Mexico and the Southwest. The stepped, curvilinear parapeted gables with metal coping on the east and west elevations are prominent features that terminate the gable ends of the roof in a manner suitable to the Spanish Colonial Revival style. Each gable has a rose window motif. The existing dormer window repeats the curvilinear parapeted gable found on the east and west elevations; originally the dormer window was "...embellished with incised decoration and spiralling pinnacles - dominating the facade..."¹

The first floor is comprised of an entry hall with marble floors, a Rococo style living room with an adjacent game room, and a dining room with an adjacent solarium. There are indications that the existing game room and solarium occupy spaces that were originally open galleries. The sidelights flanking the entry doors and the fanlight above are of leaded glass. Double doors, etched with the monogram "K" and beveled with buttons of cut clear glass panels, separate the living room from the game room. Beveled glass doors also separate the dining room from the solarium.

Opulent interior features include a marble floor in the entry hall, a non-working marble fireplace in the dining room, Italian marble in an upstairs bathroom, a Venetian glass chandelier from Murano, Italy, and a 7,000 bottle wine cellar. The living room is paneled. The house is outfitted with a ship's bilge pump, reflecting the owner's concern for hurricanes in low lying Galveston.

Footnote:

1 Galveston Historical Foundation Historic Homes Tour Guide: Galveston, May, 1976.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE

Outbuildings include a hip roofed, two story carriage house with an attached, one story greenhouse and a tool shed which originally served as a cow barn. The grounds were originally dominated by palm trees, but now the live oaks overshadow the palms.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1907-1908

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Sir Alfred C. Bossom, architect,
R.I.B.A. (b.1881- d. 1965)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Kempner House is an example of the rampant eclectic revivalism typical of architectural practices during the first quarter of the twentieth century. The Spanish Colonial Revival style represents a conscious rejection of the prolific Victorian styles of earlier residences and mansions in Galveston. With many of the original interior appointments still in place, it is a fine example of the turn-of-the-century lifestyle of a prominent Galveston family. The house was designed by Sir Alfred C. Bossom, a New York City architect of English birth and training, who designed many high rise office buildings on the East coast as well as the Magnolia Petroleum Building (1921) in Dallas and the First National Bank Building, also in Dallas.

The excerpt below from Sir ^{Alfred} Bossom's book An Architectural Pilgrimage in Old Mexico illustrates his spirited quest for a reproducible style:

"...If one would know the genius of the New World which Columbus gave to Castile and Leon, one must seek those architectural fabrics most typical of the spirit of all the Americas.

Where shall the pilgrim go on such a quest?... Surely the soul of America is not truly to be found in its Colonial architecture.... The aborigines who dwelt within its borders left no architectural remains.... Therefore, the writer, directed by the logic of facts wandered across the Rio Grande into that storied land where Montezuma gloried.

Mexico! Not to visit Mexico is not to know the Western Hemisphere. Not to have viewed the monuments of its romantic past is not to sense the inner meaning of American traditions, nor to fully grasp the development of the American people.... To the people of the United States, Mexico is logically a far greater source of influence than has yet been realized...."2

^{Alfred} Sir Bossom was a prolific author of numerous magazine articles. His other books include Our House and Building to the Skies; the Romance of the Skyscraper (1934). In 1903 he was invited to the U.S. to design housing for the workers of the Carnegie Steel Mills and in 1908 he undertook the restoration of Fort Ticonderoga.

Footnote:

2 Bossom, Sir Alfred C. An architectural pilgrimage in old Mexico, New York: S. Scribner's Sons, 1924.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Galveston City Directories
 D. W. Kempner Scrapbooks, Rosenberg Library Archives Dept.
 Galveston Daily News
 Galveston County Property Tax Records
 Galveston Historical Foundation Historic Homes Tour Guide, May 15-16, 1976
 Sanborn Insurance Maps for Galveston.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

QUADRANGLE NAME Galveston, Texas

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,5 | 3,2,5 | 8,7,0 | 3,2,4,1 | 6,2,0
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B | | | | |
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C | | | | |

D | | | | |

E | | | | |

F | | | | |

G | | | | |

H | | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property measures 275 ft. by 150 ft. on the southeast corner of outlet 41.

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 Evangeline L. Whorton,
Larry J. Wygant and John T. Hamilton

June 9, 1977

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Galveston Historical Foundation

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

P. O. Box 302

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Galveston

Texas

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

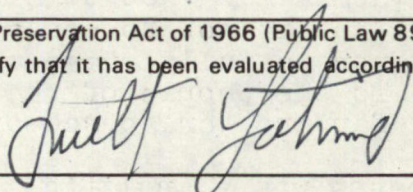
THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

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 February 1, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Charles W. Adams
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 3-30-79

ATTEST: Maurella Steffy
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 3-29-79

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE

The geometry of the original Kempner House remains intact despite the alterations; there are historic photographs which make it possible to reconstruct the original detailing of the dormer. Many original furnishings, portraits, dishes, lighting fixtures, and valuable collections of the Daniel Webster Kempner family remain in the house, as well as several items that D. W. Kempner inherited from his father Harris Kempner.

The Kempners' business, civic and humanitarian efforts were recognized on a local, state, and national level. Daniel Webster Kempner was involved in banking, cotton and cotton warehousing. The Galveston Cotton Company, the Merchants and Planters Compress and Warehouse Company expanded under his leadership. He was a director of the United States National Bank of Galveston and of the American Indemnity Company. He was a trustee of Sugarland Industries, a director of the National Foreign Trade Council and of the Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College. Mr. Kempner showed his humanitarian interests during World War I when President Woodrow Wilson appointed him Field Director of the American Red Cross. His wife, Jean Bertig Kempner, was one of Galveston's most prominent and active civic and social workers. She was one of the organizers of the Galveston Little Theatre. She re-organized the Galveston League of Women Voters, was elected State Chairman of the Texas League of Women Voters, and served on the Immigration Special Committee of the National League. Mrs. Kempner was an organizer of the British Allied Merchant Navy Club. She assisted in organizing the Galveston Civic Music Association and organized the American Women's Voluntary Services in Galveston, serving as State Chairman and member of the National Board.

Mrs. Kempner lived in the house from the time it was built until her death in 1973; Mr. Kempner lived there from 1908 until he died in 197 .

Property

Kempner, Daniel Webster, House

State

Tx

Working Number

2.14.79.335

Ref. # 79002.945

TECHNICAL

Photos

4

Maps

CONTROL

OK 2.15.79

House is a significant example of "rampant eclectic revivalism" important as the work of Dr. Alfred C. Bossom and for its associations with the Kempner family, major business and social figures in Galveston.

HISTORIAN

Shofx

3-29-79

accept

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____

Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

see above

Information which describes significance is there but form does not summarize this for us.

Shofx

3-29-79

accept

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

National Register Write-up _____

Federal Register Entry _____

5-1-79

Send-back _____

Re-submit _____

Entered _____

MAR 30 1979



Daniel Webster Kemper House
2504 Avenue O
Galveston, Galveston Co., Texas
Photo by Danny Hardy, Texas
Historical Commission, 1979
South elevation
Photo #1

FEB 14 1979

MAR 30 1979



Daniel Webster Kempner House
2504 Avenue O
Galveston, Galveston Co., Texas
Photo by Danny Hardy, Texas
Historical Commission, 1979
North elevation
Photo #2

FEB 14 1979

MAR 30 1979



East Wing
Daniel Webster Kempner House
2504 Avenue O
Galveston Texas

Daniel Webster Kempner House
2504 Avenue O
Galveston, Galveston Co., Texas
Photo courtesy of Daniel Kempner
Thorne, 1978
Southeast oblique
Photo #3

FEB 14 1979

MAR 30 1979



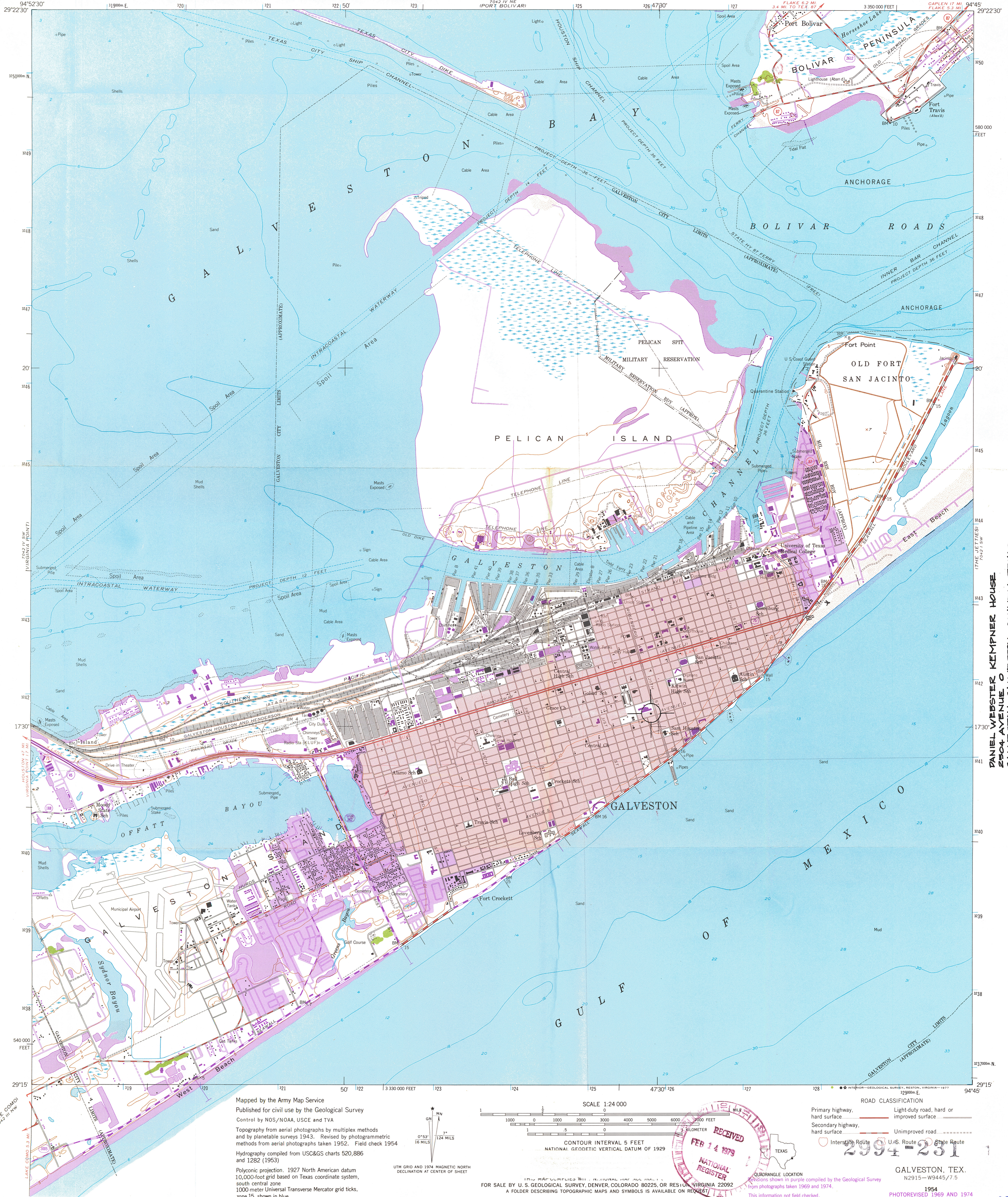
Green

Green House -
Carriage House
Daniel Webster Kempner House
2504 ~~25th Street~~ Avenue O
Galveston

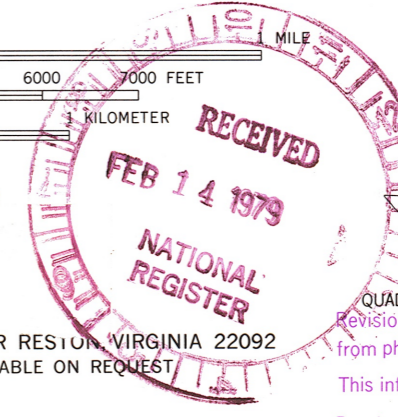
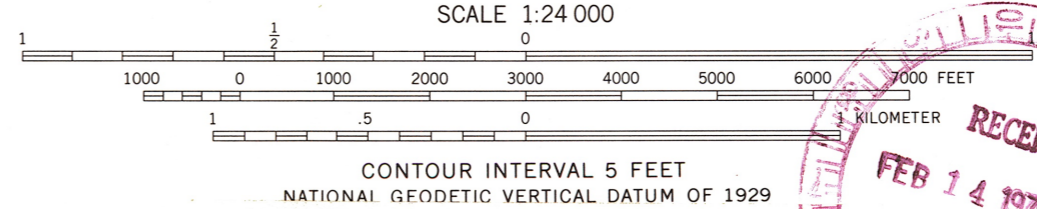
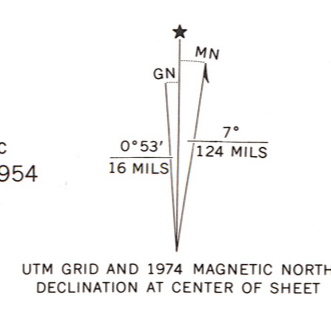
Daniel Webster Kempner House
2504 Avenue O
Galveston, Galveston Co., Texas
Photo courtesy of Daniel Kempner
Thorne, 1978
Greenhouse/Carriage House
Photo #4

FEB 14 1979

MAR 30 1979



Mapped by the Army Map Service
Published for civil use by the Geological Survey
Control by NOS/NOAA, USCE and TVA
Topography from aerial photographs by multiplex methods
and by planetable surveys 1943. Revised by photogrammetric
methods from aerial photographs taken 1952. Field check 1954
Hydrography compiled from USCGS charts 520,886
and 1282 (1953)
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 15, shown in blue
Red tint indicates area in which only
landmark buildings are shown



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Interstate Route
U.S. Route
State Route
Light duty road, hard or improved surface
Unimproved road
GALVESTON, TEX.
N2915-W9445/7.5
1954
PHOTOREVISED 1969 AND 1974
AMS 7042 IV SE-SERIES V82

DANIEL WEBSTER KEMPNER HOUSE
2504 AVENUE O
GALVESTON GALVESTON COUNTY, TEXAS
U.T.M. REFERENCE:
15 / 325570 / 3241620

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE TEXAS

Date Entered **MAR 30 1979**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Kempner, Daniel Webster, House	Galveston Galveston County
Beaumont Y. M. C. A.	Beaumont Jefferson County
Zimmerscheidt-Leyendecker House	Columbus vicinity Colorado County

Also Notified

Honorable Lloyd M. Bentsen
Honorable John G. Tower
Honorable Jack Brooks
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 4/5/79

For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-6401.