

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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SEP 19 1979

NOV 19 1979

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Stillman, Charles House

AND/OR COMMON

The Charles Stillman House Museum

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1305 E. Washington St.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Brownsville

VICINITY OF
CODECONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
fifteenth

STATE

Texas

048

COUNTY

Cameron

CODE

061

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

The City of Brownsville

STREET & NUMBER

City Hall

CITY, TOWN

Brownsville

VICINITY OF

STATE

Texas

78520

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Cameron County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

1150 East Madison Street

CITY, TOWN

Brownsville

STATE

Texas

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Brownsville Architectural/Historical Survey, Texas Historical Commission

DATE

BA/HS 7/75, THC-unknown

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☒ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

BA/HS City Planning Department, P.O. Box 911: THC

CITY, TOWN

Brownsville: Austin

STATE

Texas

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

—EXCELLENT **932** —DETERIORATED
☒GOOD —RUINS
—FAIR —UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☒UNALTERED
—ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ORIGINAL SITE
—MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

In the 1850's the residence at 1305 E. Washington Street was built for Charles Stillman. This one story home is one of the earliest Greek Revival brick structures built in Brownsville.

Located in the midst of the central business district, the house is built on a brick foundation into which metal grille vents are incorporated. The house is constructed of common bond pink brick with wood framed floor and roof construction. A flat-roofed porch, supported by four large round plastered columns, crosses the entire front facade. A simple wood balustrade extends between the columns across the front and the corner column and the wall on the ends. Simple square balusters are supported by a bottom rail raised off the floor and capped with a plain wood rail. The columns, balustrade, and balusters are all painted white. The house, which is five bays wide, has a gabled roof of slate shingles and is surrounded by a boxed white wooden cornice. There is an inside end chimney on each gable end of the front side of the ridge. Flush with the face of the wall, the chimneys extend up to an arched brick hood. Another chimney, located on the end wall of the kitchen, extends up to a four step brick course cap.

The window treatment on the house consists of wood framed, single-hung apertures. The windows have six-over-six light sashes with wooden sills and lintels. There are wooden adjustable louvre shutters painted dark green.

In an L shape, the Stillman House has a floor plan based on a large central hall. The main entrance, located on the center axis of the front facade, is a wood panel door flanked by side lights on each side. The side lights have a lower wooden panel topped by twenty-one lights. The transom, setting above a deep lintel, has twenty-one lights also. The interior flooring is of wide wooden boards, walls and ceilings are of painted plaster. Some rooms have cornices formed by picture moldings; circular ceiling medallions can also be found on several rooms.

On the right side of the center hall are the parlor, dining room, and study. There are doors on the northeast walls of the parlor and dining room connecting the three rooms. A fireplace, with a simple wooden mantelpiece and concrete hearth is found in the parlor. At the left of the center hall, opposite the parlor is the bedroom. The bedroom itself is distinguished by a wallpaper frieze forming a cornice. Following the bedroom, a small display room is found which joins a large display room. All rooms open on the center hall. At the end of the hall, opposite the main entrance, is a double wood panel door with eighteen light transom above and wood surrounds which opens onto a small garden and patio. The large display room opens onto a small kitchen with a large brick fireplace with raised hearth for cooking. Flooring in the kitchen consists of hexagonal clay tile.

Around the front and part way around the sides extends an iron fence mounted on a brick sill. A raised brick well is found in the gardens near the kitchen. A brick carriage house is found at the rear of the house. Living quarters are located in the corner of the carriage house. The quarters are inaccessible.

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

SPECIFIC DATES circa 1850 BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Charles Stillman House, circa 1850, is one of the oldest residences in Brownsville. This fine small scale Greek Revival structure was built as the home of Charles Stillman, owner and developer of the original townsite of Brownsville. Thomas Carson, agent for the Stillman interests and mayor of Brownsville from 1879-1892, occupied the home in the 1890's.

Charles Stillman arrived at Brazos de Santiago, Mexico, on February 2, 1828. Stillman was to remain there and in Matamoros, Mexico, until the end of the Mexican War in 1848. Throughout his residence in Matamoros, Stillman was engaged in several partnerships involved in the mercantile trade, and his pursuits proved to be very successful.

In 1848, following the end of the Mexican War, Stillman came to realize the importance of a townsite opposite Matamoros, and so he took steps to insure that he would profit from the land boom. Stillman hired local surveyor George Lyons soon thereafter to survey 4,676 acres and lay out town lots adjacent to the already established United States Army base of Fort Brown, for which the township was named. On December 9, 1848, the Brownsville Town Company was formed and Stillman entered into partnership with Samuel A. Belden and Jacob Mussina. Brownsville experienced a land boom throughout 1849 and the city was incorporated in 1850.

Stillman had the home at the corner of 13th and E. Washington Streets built for his new wife Elizabeth Pamela Goodrich by the time they arrived in Brownsville in August of 1849. Two of Stillman's children, James Jewett and Isabel Goodrich Stillman, were born and christened in the home. Because of the heat and high rate of disease, Stillman's wife and two eldest children left Brownsville in June 1853, for New York. Thereafter, until 1866, Stillman saw his wife and children only in the summers, when he traveled north to escape the heat.

Stillman remained in the south conducting his business with growing success. He owned a silver mine and imported goods from Europe and Mexico. Stillman also engaged in trading throughout the Gulf-Coast, forming partnerships with Mifflin Kenedy, Richard King and James O'Donell. In 1866 Stillman rejoined his family in New York, maintaining only his cotton-brokerage. Stillman died on December 18, 1875, but remained an ardent Texan throughout his lifetime.

The house itself had several subsequent owners. It was occupied by Thomas Carson in the 1890's. Carson, agent for the Stillman interests, was mayor of Brownsville from 1879-1892. Later the Joseph Trevino family inhabited the home.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See Attached Sheet)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .28

UTM REFERENCES

Map name East Brownsville, Texas

Scale 1: 24,000

A 14 650650 2865350

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Block 89, lot 7, original town site

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Nancy S. Footer

ORGANIZATION

Brownsville Historical Association

DATE

August 1, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

P.O. Box 846

(512) 542-8462 478-9994

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Brownsville,

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

[Signature]

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

9-5-79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

[Signature]

DATE

1-19-79

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST *[Signature]*

DATE

11/19/79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE one

During the Trevino ownership the home served as the Mexican Consulate for several years. Chauncey Stillman, Charles Stillman's great grandson bought the home in January 1958 from the Trevinos and made a gift of it to the Brownsville Historical Association who gave it, in turn, to the City of Brownsville. The Stillman House is maintained by the BHA as a museum and is open to the public.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

9

PAGE

one

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS: Alexander, Drury Blakely, Texas Homes of the Nineteenth Century. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1966 p. 249.

SURVEY: White, John, project supervisor. HAPS Survey. July, 1977.

PAMPHLETS: "The Twin Cities of the Border:", by Lieut. W.H. Chatfield, U.S. Army, New Orleans, 1893.

ABSTRACTS: "Supplemental Abstract covering Lots Numbers Seven and Eight in Block Number Eighty-nine of the City of Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas," prepared by Brownsville Title Company.

Stillman, Chauncey D. Charles Stillman
New York: 1966

Property

Stillman, Charles, House

State

TX (Cameron)

Working Number

9-19-79 2208

79003448

TECHNICAL

CONTROL

Photos

Maps

2

1

One of the city's oldest residences and a fine GR house; home of the owner & developer of the original townsite.

HISTORIAN

accept

Grosvonts

11/19/78

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory

Review

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

accept

S. Grosvonts

11/19/79

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

National Register Write-up

Federal Register Entry

Send-back

Re-submit

Entered

NOV 19 1979

2-5-80



Photo #1
West facade

Charles Stillman House

SEP 19 1979

1305 E. Washington

Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

Photo: Courtesy of Brownsville Historical
Association. Photo by Calvin Walker, 1978

View: West Facade

Photo #1

NOV 19 1979



photo #2
front door

Charles Stillman House

SEP 19 1979

1305 E. Washington

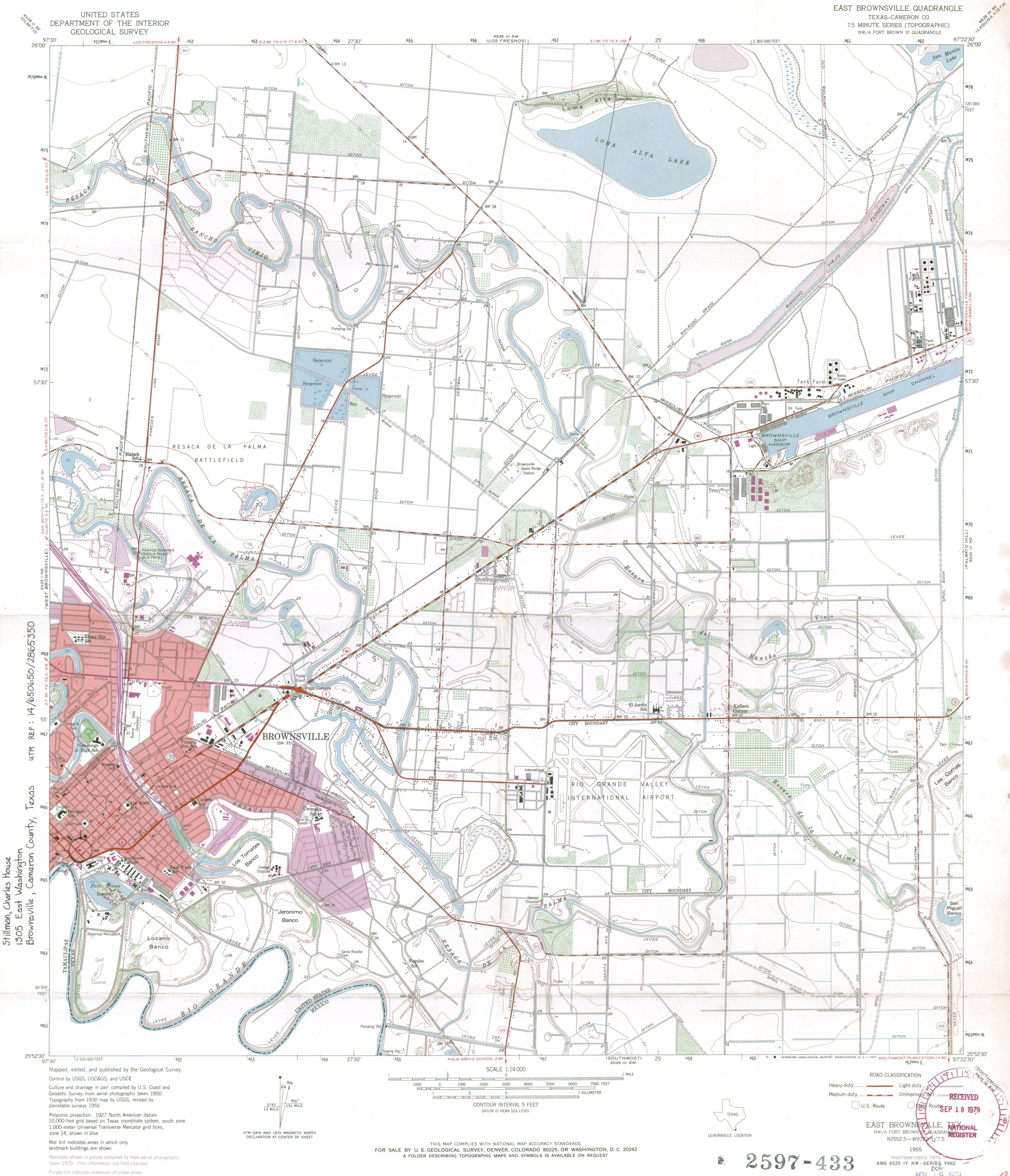
Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

Photo: Courtesy of Brownsville Historical
Association. Photo by Calvin Walker, 1978.

View: Detail West Facade

Photo #2 1/2

NOV 19 1979



Stillman, Charles House
1305 East Washington
Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

UTM REF: 14/650650/2865350

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

EAST BROWNSVILLE QUADRANGLE
TEXAS-CAMERON CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
NW/4 FORT BROWN IS QUADRANGLE

Maped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and USCE
Culture and drainage in part compiled by U.S. Coast and
Geodetic Survey from aerial photographs taken 1950
Topography from 1930 map by USGS, revised by
planetable surveys 1955
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system, south zone
1,000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 14, shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only
landmark buildings are shown
Revisions shown in purple compiled by from aerial photographs
taken 1970. This information not field checked
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

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

2597-433

NOV 19 1979

RECEIVED
SEP 19 1979
NATIONAL
REGISTER

1955
PHOTOREVISED 1970
AMS 6535 IV NW-SERIES V882
DOL

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE TEXAS

Date Entered NOV 19 1979

Name

Location

Chambersea

Anahuac
Chambers County

Old Frio County Jail

Pearsall
Frio County

Stillman, Charles, House

Brownsville
Cameron County

Also Notified

Honorable Lloyd M. Bentsen

Honorable John G. Tower

Honorable Jack Brooks

Honorable Abraham Kazen, Jr.

Honorable E. (Kika) de la Garza

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

11/28/79

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