

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received MAR 24 1980

date entered

MAY 23 1980

1. Name

historic Scanlan Building

and/or common same

2. Location

street & number 405 Main Street _____ not for publication

city, town Houston _____ vicinity of congressional district 18

state Texas code 048 county Harris code 201

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Jack C. Cannata

street & number 405 Main Street

city, town Houston _____ vicinity of state Texas

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of County Clerk, Harris County

street & number 1001 Preston

city, town Houston _____ state Texas

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible? _____ yes _____ no

date October 29, 1978 _____ 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

Consisting of 11 stories and basement, the Scanlan Building occupies approximately 85' x 101' of the southeast corner of Main and Preston. From the intersection it appears a rectangular mass; from the rear, an ell-shaped conformation, allowing light and air to the 10 office floors. The lower floor shops extend as a rectangle to the property line. An early example of fireproof steel skeleton construction in Houston, the building conforms to the Commercial Style of architecture popular during the period 1890-1915. The roof line is flat, and a projecting terra cotta cornice has been removed for safety reasons. Piers and spandrels are in the same plane on the main shaft. Only the rectangular windows and a narrow brick belt course at sill line on each floor break the smooth and balanced facades. Classic influences are observed in the restrained ornamentation and in the base-shaft capital arrangement. The two major elevations are sheathed in light grey terra cotta and matching glazed brick. The rear interior ell is faced in buff brick. In contemplation of adjoining buildings of equal height, the south and east ends of the ell were finished in common brown brick.

The two lower floors form the building's base. Here structural columns are covered in grey terra cotta applied to simulate stone pilasters rising from a narrow grey granite plinth and supporting a terra cotta entablature. Ornamental iron and plate glass show windows originally filled the spaces between at street level. The entry occupies the central bay facing Main Street. Spandrels between the first and second floors are covered by recessed terra cotta panels. Modified Chicago windows with 1/1 wood sash flanking a fixed central pane are used in each bay on the second floor.

Grey glazed brick extends from the third through the tenth floors. The vertical line established by the pilasters beneath is extended upward to form an almost imperceptible pairing of 1/1 wood sash windows (6 pairs per floor facing Preston and 5 pairs per floor facing Main). On the eleventh floor, similar though smaller and evenly spaced windows alternate with ornamental terra cotta panels to form a frieze beneath the once-projecting cornice. The same 1/1 wood sash windows encircle the entire building at this level and are also used on the interior angle of the L to light the office floors. Here they are grouped two pairs per floor facing east and three pairs per floor facing south. The ends of the L are windowless except the top floor which is pierced with six 1/1 windows.

Several classic motifs appear as ornamentation. Egg and dart, bend and reel, or other similar molding is used to define the Greek-Key casing of the entry and is repeated on recessed panels below the second floor, on pilaster capitals, and entablatures. The entry, features rows of rosettes below scrolled brackets which support its entablature. A row of upright openwork terra cotta tiles in the anthemion design replicates antefixes above the cornice at the entry and is repeated above the building's main cornice at the roof.

In addition to removal of the main cornice, other alterations are noted. On the first floor, the terra cotta covering has been replaced on several pilasters; on others grey marble has been added for several feet above the granite base. The main entrance doors and glass show windows have been replaced. Other doors were added to accommodate shops within. In some cases, the glass was recessed to conform to city safety codes. Glass brick and solid store signs fill spaces above show windows once lighted with multi-paned glass.

A recent engineering study has pronounced the building in excellent condition. The owner has the original plans.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry invention	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates August 1, 1909 **Builder/Architect** D.H. Burnham and Co.; arch.
B.H. Lichter and Co.; cont.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Completed in 1909 on the site of the first official "White House" of the Republic of Texas, the Scanlan Building is considered a landmark in Houston because of its association with the colorful Scanlan family, whose involvement in local politics, industry, and religion was noteworthy and often controversial. It is significant as the only known office building in Texas designed by D.H. Burnham & Company of Chicago, and because, as the first building of its size and style to be designed in Houston by a major national architect, it set a trend which still prevails. Because of its style, quality, and careful maintenance, the building has for seventy years made a valuable contribution to the economic well-being of Houston's central business district.

Thomas Howe Scanlan (November 10, 1832 - July 9, 1906), born in Limerick County, Ireland, immigrated to New York with his family in 1839, and to Houston in 1853. His political career, which extended from 1867 through 1879, included service as Alderman of the Third Ward, two-term Mayor of Houston, and Postmaster of the city. As a representative of the Radical Reconstruction government of Texas, Scanlan was not a popular mayor. However, later historians have noted the many civic improvements made by his administration during a difficult period in Houston's history. Despite the criticism of his detractors, Scanlan continued to make Houston his home. He invested heavily in Houston real estate and was interested in a number of industries vital to the city's growth; the Texas Western Narrow Gauge Railway, the City Street Railway, the Houston Gas Light Company, and the ship channel improvement. A major occupation was the presidency of Houston's Water Works Company, a private (and the only) supplier of municipal water to the city. Scanlan had acquired a controlling interest in the company in the early 1880's and sold it to the city in 1906 shortly before his death. Its facilities form the basis of the present city water system.

As early as 1903, Scanlan planned a large modern office building on property at Main and Preston which he had owned since 1865. After his death, his seven spinster daughters carried out his wishes as a memorial to their father. Kate, who died in 1836 at approximately 60 years of age, was the decision maker, but the Scanlan Sisters always acted in concert. Devout, quiet, almost reclusive despite their great wealth, their lives were devoted to Catholic charities and the welfare of poor families of Mexican and Bohemian descent who lived near their 8,400 acre sugar plantation on the Brazos River southwest of Houston. At her death in 1947, Lillian established the Scanlan Foundation; and following the death of the last surviving Scanlan sister, Stella, in 1950, it was revealed that the entire Scanlan fortune would go to various Catholic religious orders and educational institutions, to individual scholarships, and to the Scanlan Foundation for Catholic charities. As an asset of the Foundation, the income from the Scanlan Building and the proceeds of its recent sale have been used for charitable purposes.

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Page 2

The property upon which the building rests was first purchased from the Allen brothers, founders of Houston, in January 1837, by Francis Richard Lubbock, who built a frame storehouse there. The property and its building were sold in 1838 to the Republic of Texas for use as the official home for Presidents Sam Houston and Mirabeau B. Lamar before the government was moved to Austin in late 1839. A plaque commemorating the site of the first White House of the Republic of Texas was placed on the entrance of the present building by the state in 1936. Aside from its historic connection, the site was an advantageous one, centrally located between the lower Main Street financial district and the Rice Hotel in one direction, and between Courthouse and Market Squares in the other. It was a logical site for a major office building.

When the Scanlan family selected D.H. Burnham & Co. of Chicago as its architect, they chose one of the most prestigious firms in America at the time. Daniel H. Burnham (1846 - 1912) was a leading exponent of the Commercial Style of architecture which reached its zenith in America between 1890 and 1915. Examples of major works by Burnham or his firms (Burnham & Root, and D.H. Burnham & Co.) spanned the continent and extended to London and the Philippines. As an architect and city planner, Burnham gained fame as a designer and promoter of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. In later life he headed commissions to extend the original plans for the District of Columbia; to modernize and rebuild Manila and the summer capital at Baguio in the Philippine Islands; and to select the site, architect, and sculptor of the Lincoln Memorial. He also planned improvements for the cities of San Francisco, Cleveland, Detroit, and Chicago. A member of A.I.A. since 1884, he was named a fellow in 1887, and president of the Association in 1894.

The Scanlan Building is the only office building and one of only two commissions known to have been completed by Burnham in Texas, the other being the 1904 Union Station in El Paso. At its opening, August 1, 1909, the Scanlan Building was hailed as the largest building in the largest city in the largest state. As the first of its type and size to be completed by a nationally acclaimed architectural firm, it set precedents which other owners raced to out-do, thus breaking the ten-story barrier which leading developer Jesse Jones had set as his personal ideal for the city. The trend toward superlatives still prevails in Houston today. The building's modern design and amenities as well as its desirable location made it attractive to prominent lawyers and physicians, and to real estate, oil, and insurance businesses, thus enhancing the economic base of Houston's central business district. Its design and quality of construction have enabled the building to survive with reasonable care and without major alteration and to maintain a respectable occupancy rate in an otherwise declining area where it still serves as a stabilizing influence. The owner plans to restore the exterior facades, update the interior facilities and continue the use of the building as prime commercial space.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Daniell, Lewis E. Texas - The Country and Its Men. n.p., 1918. (copy in Texas Room, Houston Public Library)
Houston Chronicle. Copies of articles on file at the Texas Historical Commission.
Houston City Directories. Copies of pages on file at the Texas Historical Commission.

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property 0.2 acres

Quadrangle name Settegast

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	5	2	7	1	6	9	0	3	2	9	4	4	6	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H

Zone				Easting				Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 10 and parts of lots 9 and 11, Block 45, S. S. B. B. in John Austin Leagues, forming a rectangle 85.94' x 101.08'. Bounded on the northwest by Main Street, northeast by Preston Avenue. The Scanlan Building occupies the entire property described above at the southeast

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 Ann Quin Wilson, Research Historian

organization

date August 23, 1979

street & number 5221 Pine Forest Road

telephone 622-8536 - res.
652-5905 - office

city or town Houston

state Texas (77056)

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Texas State Historic Preservation Officer

date March 14, 1980

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

for Bruce Mac Douglas
Keeper of the National Register

date 5/23/80

Attest: Beth Garswena
Chief of Registration

date 5/19/80

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Houston Daily Post. Copies of articles on file at the Texas Historical Commission.

Houston Post. Copies of articles on file at the Texas Historical Commission.

Houston Press. (Copy of article in attached file)

McComb, David G. Houston, the Bayou City. Austin and London: University of Texas Press, 1969.

Timmons, Bascomb Nolly. Jesse Holman Jones. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1956

Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780. Cambridge, Mass.: The M.I.T. Press, 1969.

Withey, Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects. Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, Inc., 1970.

Writers' Program, Works Projects Administration. Houston: A History and Guide. Houston: Anson Jones Press, 1942.

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corner of Main and Preston (or the northwest corner of Block 45, which is bounded by Main, Preston, Fannin, and Prairie.) Houston, Harris County, Texas.

Property Scanlon Building

8 0004132

State TX - Harris

Working Number 3-24-80 968

TECHNICAL

CONTROL

Photos 5

Maps 1

Handmark bldg. in the city - set a trend for scale and style of commercial bldgs in the central business district. State's only known office building by D.H. Burnham - Comp. Site bought and bldg. planned by a former mayor and real estate investor who had a major influence on the city's development.

HISTORIAN

accept

Grosvena

5/19/80

Location is historically notable on the site of the first "White House" of the Rep. of TX (does not contribute to signif. of this bldg., but of interest).

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____

Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

accept

Grosvena

5/19/80

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

National Register Write-up _____
Federal Register Entry 2.3.81

Send-back _____
Re-submit _____

Entered MAY 23 1980



1916

MAY 23 1980

Scanlan Building

405 Main Street

Houston, Harris County, Texas

Photo: Ann Quin Wilson, July 1979

Negative on file

Historic photograph, ca. 1916

Courtesy Texas Room, Houston Public Library

Northwest Oblique, Camera facing southeast

Photo # 1 of 5

MAR 24 1980



MAY 23 1980

Scanlan Building

405 Main Street

Houston, Harris County, Texas

Photo: Ann Quin Wilson, July, 1979

Negatives on file

Northwest Oblique, camera facing southeast

Photo # 2 of 5

MAR 24 1980



RELEA

RHEALE
ABC

NERY

CLASSIFIED
PARKING
SYSTEM
1.00 4.00

MAY 23 1980

Scanlan Building
405 Main Street
Houston, Harris County, Texas
Photo: Ann Quin Wilson, July, 1979
Negatives on file
Southwest Oblique, camera facing northeast
Photo # 3 of 5

MAR 24 1980



MAY 23 1980

Scanlan Building
405 Main Street
Houston, Harris County, Texas
Photo: Ann Quin Wilson, July, 1979
Negatives on file
Southeast Oblique, camera facing northwest
Photo # 4 of 5

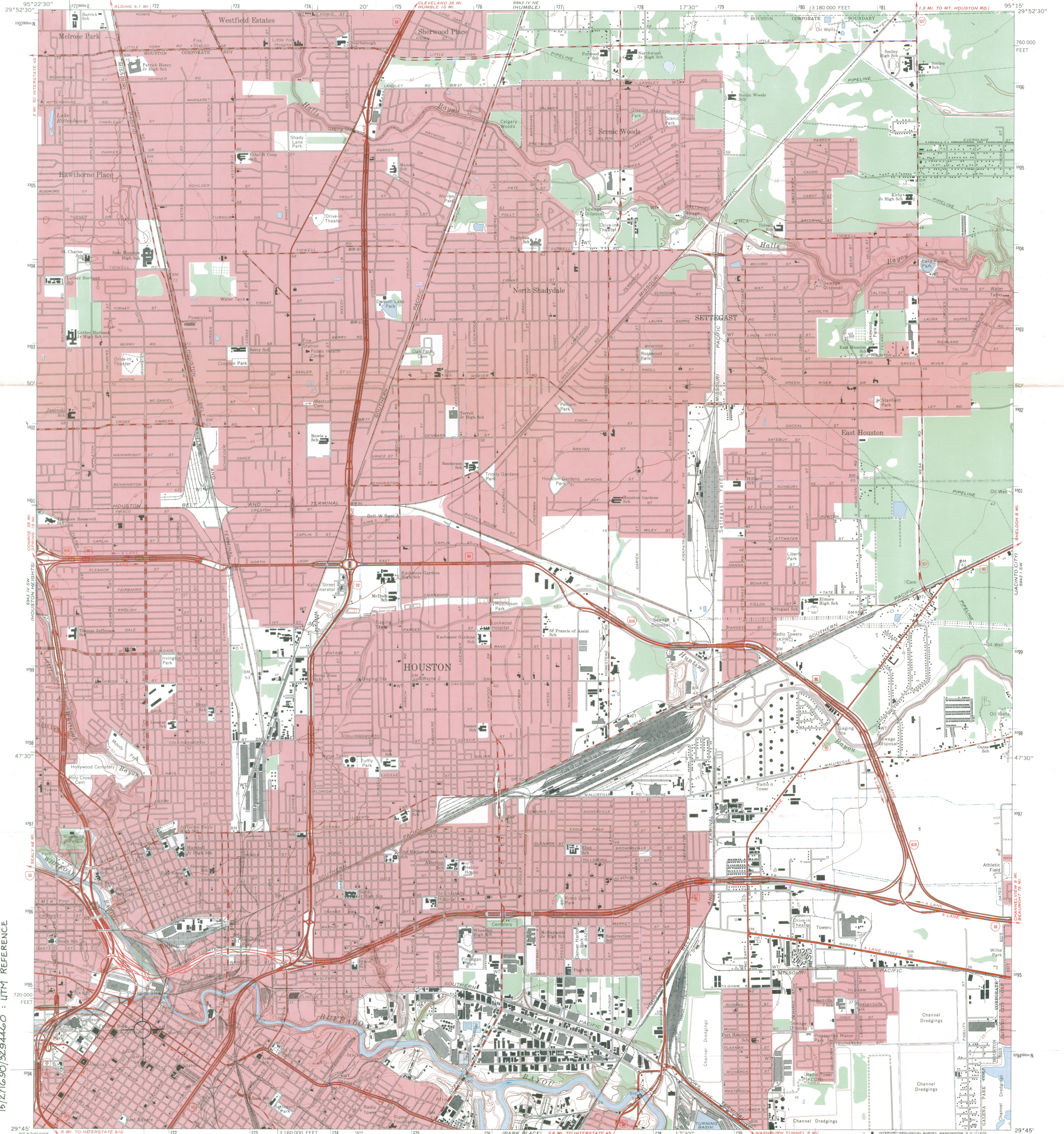
MAR 24 1980



MAY 23 1980

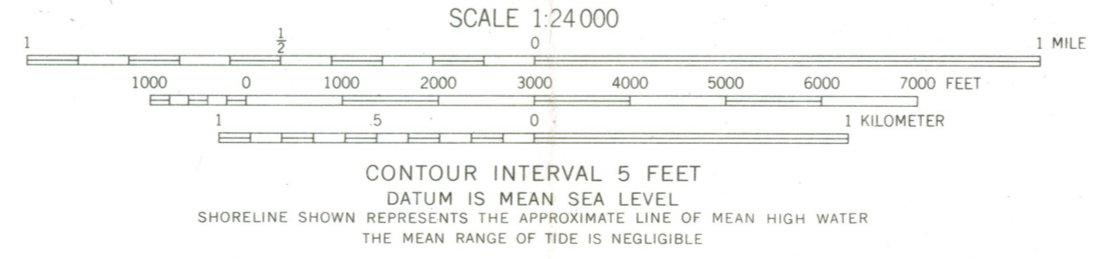
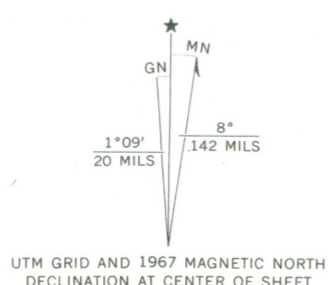
Scanlan Building
405 Main Street
Houston, Harris County, Texas
Photo: Ann Quin Wilson, July, 1979
Negatives on file
West Elevation, camera facing east
Entrance detail
Photo # 5 of 5

MAR 24 1980



SCANLAN BUILDING
405 MAIN STREET
HOUSTON, HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS
15/271690/3294460 : UTM REFERENCE

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and USCE
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1966. Topography enlarged from 1:31 680-scale AMS map of Settegast Quadrangle. Original map by planetable surveys 1943. Revised 1967
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 areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



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ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Light-duty
Medium-duty
Interstate Route
U.S. Route
State Route

QUADRANGLE LOCATION
SETTEGAST, TEX.
N2945—W9515/7.5

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

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE TEXAS

Date Entered MAY 23 1980

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Miller, John Hickman, House	Dallas Dallas County
Warren-Crowell House	Terrell Kaufman County
Whaley House	Longview Gregg County
Park Hotel	Seguin Guadalupe County
Taylor National Bank	Taylor Williamson County
Hays County Courthouse	San Marcos Hays County
Scanlan Building	Houston Harris County

Also Notified

Honorable Lloyd Bentsen

Honorable John G. Tower
Honorable James M. Collins
Honorable Ray Roberts
Honorable Abraham Kazen, Jr.
Honorable James M. Leath
Honorable J. J. (Jake) Pickle
Honorable Mickey Leland

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 6/2/80
For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-6401.